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Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7621st meeting
Monday, 15 February 2016, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Ms. Rodríguez Gómez	(Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))
Members:	Angola	Mr. Augusto
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Yoshikawa
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Van Bohemen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Spain	Mr. Ibáñez
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli

Agenda

Maintenance of internationai peace and security

Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 1 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/103)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security

Letter dated 1 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2016/103)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to warmly welcome to the Security Council the Secretary-General, Ministers and other representatives whose presence in the Chamber today underscores the importance of the subject we are discussing.

In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Maldives, Morocco, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following to participate in this meeting: His Excellency Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Téte António, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations; His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Fathalla, Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations; and His Excellency Mr. Gonzalo Koncke, Permanent Observer of the Organization of American States to the United Nations.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and previous practice in that regard.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2016/103, which contains the text of a letter dated 1 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

The Secretary-General (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the presidency of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for having organized this open debate on a theme of great importance to the United Nations.

(*spoke in English*)

Today's event continues the useful discussion initiated last year under the Chinese presidency. The year 2015 saw important steps taken to uphold the values and advance the vision set out in the Charter of the United Nations. Reviews of the international peace and security architecture provided valuable ideas for strengthening our work in conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) and the Paris Agreement on climate change demonstrated our capacity to overcome divisions and chart a course towards the common good.

While we celebrate these achievements, we must also recognize that 2015 was one of the most troubled and turbulent years in recent history. Civil wars ravaged Syria and Yemen. Violent extremism spread. The blatant disrespect for fundamental principles of international human rights and humanitarian law defies our common humanity and challenges the Security Council in fulfilling its duties under the Charter. For the millions living amid war and extreme poverty, and for countless others whose rights are violated or neglected in other ways, the ideals and aspirations of the Charter remain elusive. Bringing the promise of the Charter to the most vulnerable must continue to be our goal.

Decades of experience have validated the Charter's vision. We understand better than ever that peace, development and human rights are intrinsically connected. We have seen that conflict-affected countries generally experience the highest poverty rates and were the least likely to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. We know that human rights abuses are our most effective early-warning signs of the instability that often escalates into atrocity crimes.

The primary responsibility for preventing conflict and protecting human rights lies with Member States. It is clearly established in the Charter and reiterated in numerous resolutions adopted by the Council, as well as by the General Assembly. But in some situations, Member States may lack the capacity to fulfil their obligations. In others, it is Member States themselves that are the main violators of human rights. The United Nations can help Member States meet these national challenges and uphold their responsibility to protect.

We continue to offer assistance in building up national capacity to identify and address the precursors of genocide and other grave crimes. The Human Rights Up Front initiative is helping the United Nations system to coordinate better across the peace and security, development and human rights pillars, and to engage with Member States at early stages of crises. We are placing a growing focus on prevention through both early warning and early action.

We should all much prefer to assess early information than to wait for the warning signs of disaster. We should be open to modest steps that could address situations of concern before they grow more serious and complex. Our engagement with Member States on these matters will continue to be based on cooperation, transparency and respect for sovereignty. I know that at times Member States feel that such efforts are a form of interference that undermines national sovereignty, but it is violence and conflict — and not our attempt to help Member States prevent them — that threaten State sovereignty. It is violations of human rights by the State that erode the legitimacy of the State. In its engagements, the United Nations seeks to reinforce sovereignty, not challenge or undermine it.

Article 99 of the Charter empowers the Secretary-General to

> "bring to the attention of the Security Council any matter which in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security".

The General Assembly has recognized this as well. Article 99 has been formally invoked only rarely in United Nations history, but that does not mean it is no longer operative or relevant, or that it cannot be invoked in the future. It remains a key mechanism.

Whether or not Article 99 is formally invoked may be secondary. First and foremost is our responsibility to alert the Council when we see situations that we feel require its engagement. I will continue to act in that spirit. When considering which items reach the agenda of the Security Council, my further hope is that we will be driven by the Charter, not by geopolitical rivalries or other external dynamics. When a Member State uses an overly broad definition of terrorism to monopolize power at the risk of long-term stability, that would seem to merit the Council's attention. When we see massive loss of life and cross-border flows of people, that would seem to merit the Council's attention. We must not avert our eyes from these or other such situations, no matter how complex or contentious they might be to discuss. And the world must see that the Council is addressing the situations that matter most to most people.

The Security Council has many tools with which to encourage and seek to secure the peaceful resolution of disputes before they escalate, but ultimately the unity of the Security Council is the crucial factor. We have seen what heights are possible when unity is visible, and we have seen the depths that are inevitable when unity has vanished. We look forward to working with Council members to best serve we the peoples in the enduring spirit of the Charter.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

I should like to offer a special welcome to the young Venezuelans of the Venezuelan chapter of the Model United Nations who are here with us this morning, bearing witness to our discussion of the future of the multilateral system and the right to international peace and security.

I should like to begin by conveying the greetings of the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, His Excellency Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros. I wish to stress the importance to Venezuela of respect for the international rule of law to the maintenance of

international peace and security. There is a pressing need to highlight the existing and often lethal means for dismantling national and international legal orders as a way to undermine one particular fundamental principle of the Charter of the United Nations — the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

Throughout human history, war and conflict have caused untold suffering that have hindered social development and economic progress. The prevention of conflicts has therefore always been a shared objective of the international community. Ensuring and maintaining peace as a principle and fundamental right are critical to implementing not only the Millennium Development Goals but also the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), adopted by the Organization on the occasion of its 70th anniversary. We warmly thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his role in those initiatives.

This debate is all the more relevant for taking place 70 years after the establishment of the United Nations, as it serves to remind us of the fundamental importance of sovereign equality and of the fact that the purposes of the Organization will be achieved only if States enjoy such equality and fully fulfil the requirements of that principle in the course of their international relations. As the Secretary-General called for last year during the presidency of the People's Republic of China, we aim to further entrench that aspect. Actively and permanently promoting the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, including honouring and fulfilling their provisions, are the basis for ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security. The sovereign equality of States, national independence, unity and territorial integrity, non-interference in internal affairs, non-aggression, the peaceful settlement of disputes, cooperation and the right of peoples to self-determination and the fostering of friendly relations and cooperation among countries, tolerance and peaceful coexistence as good neighbours are the essential ingredients of world peace.

The Charter of the United Nations became the first international multilateral legal instrument to expressly and definitively prohibit war as a tool of foreign policy. As such, the development of international law is one of the most important aims of the United Nations. The Preamble sets the goal of establishing conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained. As members are aware, during the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, the General Assembly adopted a declaration on the inadmissibility of intervention in the internal affairs of States and on safeguarding independence and sovereignty. For most countries without coercive capacity or tools to impose conditions on inter-State or regional relations, respect for international law is the most important pillar for international peace and security, including the obligation of all States to ensure a more just and equitable world.

In the course of its history, the Organization has had important achievements in the area of international peace, security and cooperation. It has made significant contributions to human rights, decolonization and economic and social development. Nevertheless, the world is in a constant state of needing stability and peace, which makes it necessary to activate the mechanisms and legal framework to address the challenges posed by extreme violence, terrorism, intolerance and the spread of hatred. There has been an almost three-fold increase since 2008 in the number of ongoing civil wars — from four to 11— which is in contrast to the long-running trend we saw beginning in the 1990s. There are eight armed conflicts in Africa alone, while four violent conflicts in the Middle East have led to the dismantling of sovereign States and made it possible for terrorists and violent armed groups to take control.

The situation in the Middle East and the Palestinian question is a case in point in which the Security Council has had a crucial role and has adopted countless resolutions. Yet that situation remains unresolved after almost 70 years and continues to have a determining impact on peace and security in a region that, for the past five years, has suffered the consequences of mistaken approaches to addressing solutions in a fair and comprehensive way wherein, first and foremost, the establishment of the Palestinian State constitutes the basic, decisive element for peace in the region. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela — inspired by and following in the footsteps of our eternal Commander Hugo Chávez Frías — resolutely supports the Palestinian cause for an independent, sovereign State that — and we will never tire of saying it — has the right to an immediate cessation of the criminal acts of aggression on the part of Israel against its people, including children, older persons and women, as well as the right to finally legitimately recover its territories, with the support of the international community.

The phenomenon of terrorism, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, protracted conflicts, pending colonial situations and the instability and violence in the Middle East and parts of Africa are a result of approaches contrary to the purposes and principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. Violating the rule of law therefore leads to prolonged violent conflict. Humankind faces the real threat of permanent war.

While we are here discussing the rule of international law, intensive negotiations by a group of countries are being held to urgently find a peaceful resolution to the conflict in Syria, a country plagued by terrorism and extreme violence as a way to delegitimize the will of its people and bring about the disintegration of its territory.

Many of the conflicts that have occurred over the past seven decades could have been prevented if the causes that generated them had not been repeatedly linked to the particular interests of imperialist domination. While developing countries have been standard-bearers for the validity of and strict adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter, some of the most developed countries have been determined to act to the contrary, leading to unilateral acts of aggression that negate the foundation and very essence of the Organization and constant ambition to ensure capitalist rule over countries' natural resources, while adhering to colonial and neocolonial strategies and practices,. All of that has served to worsen socioeconomic inequality, discrimination, xenophobia, interventionism and violations of the right to self-determination. Paradoxically, they invade, assassinate, pay mercenaries, occupy territory and usurp the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples — all in the name of democracy and human rights.

In addition to that, we should also note the growing intrusion into the internal affairs of States by Governments in violation of the principle of non-interference. Attempts to ignore the right of countries and peoples to decide their future, particularly when it comes to defining for themselves their political, economic and social systems, constitute an obstacle to peaceful coexistence among nations, and thus to international peace and security.

The world continues to suffer from a clash between antagonistic models of economic exploitation by hegemonic, imperial Powers that insatiably seek to appropriate natural resources and raw materials to satisfy the interests of a global minority. According to the Oxfam report for 2015, 1 per cent of the world's population has wealth equivalent to 99 per cent of the rest of the population. The capitalist system has therefore been transformed internally in order to ensure its survival and hegemonic domination, even at the cost of jeopardizing the existence of humankind. That essential transformation has been accompanied by real forces that have recently transformed the nature of conflicts and of the threats to international peace and security. Conflicts today do not just concern military confrontations, but also encompass economic strangulation, psychological wars, social devastation and financial and technological strangulation — all of which have a negative impact on the stability of countries, undermine sovereignty and contravene the principle of non-interference in internal affairs.

The dismantling of the rule of law at the national and international levels entails using powerful, unconventional methods of war whereby the military occupation of vast amounts of territories serves to further institutional vulnerability and the delegitimizaition of sovereign States already heavily weakened by those real forces I mentioned.

Latin America, a region of peace, is today suffering real threats that could lead to the fragmentation of its independent national States. The neoliberal era — which was supplanted by models of development focused on the internal capacities, technologies and potentials of our countries that turned away from the colonial yokes that sought only to plunder our wealth — is trying to make a comeback in our region through the use of unconventional means for the dismantling of the rule of law at the national level and the substitution of the institutions of governance by the forces I referred to. Coups d'états have been assuming new forms and have been attempting to weaken institutions, provoked by the meddling of those Powers outside international law in line with undemocratic and violent factors that promote hatred and intolerance.

The severity and complexity of the challenges currently being faced require a determined approach by the United Nations, particularly by the Security Council, to enable Member States to agree on new multilateral approaches that can respond within the framework of the purposes and principles of the Charter in situations that may arise from those new threats to the sovereignty and political independence of countries. The Bolivarian

Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its full respect for those values and calls attention to the risks and threats that undermine their application and compromise the ability of Member States in their complete, effective implementation, with a view to strengthening international peace and security. We firmly maintain the necessity of rebuilding the multilateral framework in order to urgently safeguard the rule of law to rein in the shadow forces that seek to violently dominate the world with their own laws, putting aside international governance. They constitute real risks and threats to the world, with the substitution of their multilateral governance for the de facto powers that have effectively limited the independence and sovereignty of countries.

To do that, it is necessary, within the sphere of the Security Council, to avoid the application of double standards. We the members of the Council need to be the strongest and main defenders of international law, the rule of law and the purposes and principles in the Charter of the United Nations. We must set the example. We must reject the application of double standards in the addressing issues that affect international peace and security. In addition, in order to safeguard and fully uphold the purposes and the principles of the Charter, Member States must reject and refrain from applying unilateral coercive measures and national legislation with extraterritorial effects. They also should not be bringing to the Security Council issues that rightly belong to the jurisdiction of States, in accordance with paragraph 7, Article 2, of the Charter.

I would like to reiterate our position, voiced during the seventieth session of the General Assembly, in which we highlighted the need for the United Nations to adapt its bodies to submit to the general sovereignty of the peoples of the world who demand that their voices be heard and respected. As our eternal Commander Hugo Chávez said, we need to democratize and adapt the United Nations and its bodies to today's challenges — challenges that flow from the displacement of the multilateral system of the rule of law by de facto powers.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I shall now give the floor to the other members of the Council.

Mr. Augusto (Angola): At the outset, let me welcome Her Excellency Ms. Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and to thank her for presiding over this open debate on the critical issue of respect for the Charter of the United Nations and its purposes and principles. We also wish to welcome and thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban-Ki-Moon, for his comprehensive and thoughtful briefing.

The founding of the United Nations and the adoption of the Charter was a remarkable achievement for the international community — setting principles for the development of friendly relations among nations, establishing a principled commitment to maintain international peace and security, declaring the goal of achieving international cooperation in solving international problems and creating a centre for harmonizing the actions of the nations. Those purposes and principles have became pillars of international law and the framework of support for a system of collective security that, despite setbacks, over the past 70 years has made the United Nations the centre of international efforts to make the world more peaceful based on respect for international law, human rights and cooperation among all peoples and nations.

To maintain international peace and security is the first purpose inscribed in the Charter. The prescription to that end is the mobilization of collective action for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. Through such a multilateral approach, the United Nations became the main forum for collective, multilateral action by the international community, not only in the maintenance of peace but in other domains of life as well.

The General Assembly, as a main organ of the United Nations, has responsibilities that cannot be declined in the maintenance of international peace and security. However, it is on the security Council that the Charter and the Member Sates entrust special powers on matters pertaining to international peace and security. By delegating to the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and for acting on its behalf, throughout the years the United Nations membership has been providing tangible political and material support to the Security Council, permitting the discharge of its mandate in a world that is ever more complicated and bellicose.

The Security Council has powers, inter alia, to determine whether a situation constitutes a threat to peace, to make recommendations and decide upon provisional measures, to decide on measures, whether

or not involving the use of armed force, to mobilize forces and assistance from Member States, and to plan for the application of armed forces. In the discharge of that powerful mandate, conferred upon it by the international community, the Security Council is bound, according to the Charter, to act in accordance with its purposes and principles, putting the Security Council, as powerful as it might be, under the scrutiny of the Charter provisions, whose principles the Security Council is bound to abide by.

To develop friendly relations among nations is the second purpose inscribed in the Charter, while respecting the principle of equal rights and the right of all peoples to self-determination, with the final aim of strengthening universal peace. Those principles, establishing the pattern for relations among Member States, became the cornerstone of contemporary international relations: sovereign equality, the fulfilment by States of their obligations in good faith, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, refraining from the threat or use of force, solidarity with United Nations preventive or enforcement actions against any State and the primacy of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.

Those principles have become commonplace in diplomatic life, an integral part of diplomatic documents and a part of common knowledge in international relations. However, the reality is not so rosy as the proponents of the Charter idealized. The purposes and the principles enshrined in the Charter are violated time and again. Interference in other countries' internal affairs and violations of sovereignty are a quite common and well-known feature of international relations, which is in clear disrespect for the Charter, while negatively impacting international peace and security. Therefore, the need arises for a renewed approach in meeting the noble purposes and principles of the Charter in order to address evolving global dynamics and challenges.

To achieve international cooperation in solving international problems is the third purpose inscribed in the Charter — which, in our view, has been the most successful and the most tangible contribution of the United Nations to world peace and security. International cooperation under United Nations auspices comprises, inter alia, the fight against terrorism and international crime, human rights, social and economic development, climate change, epidemics, humanitarian assistance and migration. Specialized agencies make a unique contribution to international cooperation development in all sectors of human activity — from food and agriculture to health, labour, education, culture, intellectual property, refugees, commerce, atomic energy, and the list could go on and on. Moreover, the United Nations presence in all Member States through country teams or other structures attests to the scope and importance of the United Nations system in promoting international cooperation to solve international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character.

Finally, the United Nations, as a centre for harmonizing the action of nations, must meet the aims of the Charter. In its role as the world parliament, the General Assembly's agenda and its influential work attest to the international community's commitment to multilateralism. The willing participation of States in the debate and decision-making process translate good will and awareness on the importance of cooperating on a wide range of issues that are matters of concern for the entire international community. The recent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), the outcome of the latest Conference on Financing for Development and the recent holding of the Climate Change Conference are but a few instances the importance the United Nations has assumed as the privileged centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

This is an excellent opportunity for once again reaffirming our faith in, and commitment to, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which remain as valid and as relevant as they were at the time of the Charter's adoption. Member States are resolutely called upon to accept and apply those principles as a recognition of the primacy of law in international relations, where dialogue is the best solution to solve international problems and avoid recourse to the use of force.

Finally, we wish to commend the Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council for providing us this opportunity to discuss and take stock of our collective responsibility at a time when the international community faces enormous global challenges, such as the proliferation of conflicts, famines, epidemics, climate change and so on. To face such challenges, international cooperation under United Nations auspices is a key element.

Mr. Ybáñez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by endorsing the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union.

I would like to thank the Venezuelan presidency for having convened this open debate. The chosen subject is fully topical and relevant.

In February 2015, at the initiative of the Chinese presidency, we met to reflect on the importance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security (see S/PV.7389). I had an opportunity then to refer to a number of points, to which I now only enumerate: the full validity of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations 70 years after they were drafted; the importance of the Preamble of the Charter, whose values complement the triptych that guides the actions of the Organization; and the firm commitment of my country with all of them, which is reflected in the initiative promoted by Spain on a statement delivered to mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, adopted by consensus by the General Assembly, by which all Members renewed their commitment to the Charter as a whole, and in particular to its essential core made up of the values, purposes and principles contained therein.

We note that local and regional conflicts are increasing and that the action of the Organization in maintaining international peace and security is not what we would wish. There is therefore an urgent need to continue to work to develop instruments that will fully guarantee and uphold the values, purposes and principles established in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as to adapt those instruments to the most fluid and complex international environment since the post-Second World War period.

The observer of the African Union said a year ago,

> "The question today is how to ensure that we will fulfil the gap between the principles set forth and the results we achieve each time that action is taken." (*S/PV. 7389, p. 67*)

I agree. We must focus the debate in the realm of the practical, so that it is productive. We have not we heard discordant voices, then or two day, questioning the validity of the purposes and principles of the Charter. We appreciate the nuances with which each Member State proclaims its attachment to them depending on its history or international profile, but, again, we note no rebuttal as to validity. However, there are differences when it comes time to translating our words into action — some concern nuance, but others are more substantive. Debates like this should serve to identify those discrepancies and to try to expand and strengthen the consensus on the practical application of the values, purposes and principles of the Charter. To that end, I would like today to share with members a few thoughts.

The San Francisco Charter is the basic norm governing coexistence in the international community. Among its purposes and principles, as recalled by the concept note (S/2016,103, annex), respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States is a crucial safeguard for peace and stability. Violation thereof inevitably results in chaos, violence and a return to a state of nature of the past. The 1975 Helsinki Final Act reaffirmed respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity as a fundamental principle for cooperation and security in Europe. I would like to reiterate the full validity of that concept here today.

International peace and security are inextricably linked to respect for human rights, as the Secretary-General said earlier. They are two sides of the same coin, which is perhaps the reason that the drafters of the Charter focused on it: safeguarding future generations from the scourge of war and reaffirming faith in the fundamental rights of man and in the dignity and worth of the human being. Increasingly, we see the close relationship between those two pillars of the Organization, as well as the relationship of each one of them with the third, namely, development. We need to maximize the synergies that exist among those various concepts. Initiatives such as the Human Rights Up Front initiative, which highlights the relationship between human rights violations and the risk of conflict, deserve our full support.

In addition, human rights issues need to be given due weight on the agenda of the Security Council, which must devote increasing attention to such issues. During our presidency in October 2015, we tried to give the utmost relevance to the high-level review of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. We believe that the high level of participation and commitment on the part of those involved in that exercise explains, in large measure, the successful result — in the form of an agenda that is essential for the maintenance of international peace and security.

It is crucial that we work to develop international law so that all States, organizations and international entities operate under the rule of law and the principles of legality, while also respecting fundamental human rights. We must also concentrate on improving the international legal architecture. That requires making the legal order — articulated around the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations — applicable to all States, organizations and individuals. Those purposes and principles need to be implemented in a determined international context, which in 2016 is not the same as in 1945. The nature of conflict is different today. A few decades ago threats to national sovereignty came primarily from without. Today, they primarily come from within, and they are rooted in ethnic and identity issues, which undermine collective rights, respect for democracy and individual liberties and rights.

The barbarism of terrorist groups, non-State armed actors and other groups also represents a serious threat. In order to preserve State sovereignty, efforts need to be made to respect those principles of law. The United Nations needs to pay greater attention to emerging crises and to the factors underlying those conflicts and their root causes. The panels that were created last year in order to evaluate and review peace operations, the peacekeeping architecture and the issue of women and peace and security are instrumental in that regard.

The Secretary-General's plan of action to prevent violent extremism is also an example to follow, in as much as its multidimensional approach places prevention at the heart of that proposal, by reinforcing good governance, representative institutions, political participation, quality education, decent work, particularly for youth, and respect for the rights that account for such an important component in that strategy for preventing violent extremism. Spain also attaches great importance to initiatives involving preventive diplomacy on the national level. Currently, we are working on the organization of a conference on preventative diplomacy in the Middle East and North Africa, which will take up, from a regional perspective, the roles that democratic governance, civil society and the participation of women play in the prevention of conflicts in the Mediterranean.

Occasionally, the lack of capacity or willingness on the part of some Governments to ensure the rule of law and respect for human rights creates a culture that readily promotes humanitarian conflict and crises, such as that which is now affecting millions of individuals in Syria, Yemen, Darfur, the Sudan, South Sudan, Burundi and so many other areas of the world. The consequences are felt in neighbouring countries. We must be very clear with regard to that problem. Sovereignty entails responsibilities, such as protecting civilians from the risk of becoming the victims of mass atrocities. When States do not shoulder those responsibilities, that puts peace at risk. In this debate, the responsibility to protect is particularly relevant in that regard. It should be promoted, while also respecting the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly when States are not up to the task of exercising their responsibilities.

In accordance with the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1), Spain is convinced that it is important to continue building consensus around the importance of implementing the responsibility to protect. In that connection, in June of last year in Madrid, Chile and Spain organized the fifth meeting of the Global Network of the Responsibility to Protect Focal Points. We discussed the challenges and threats facing vulnerable communities. In December, we organized with Chile an Arria-formula debate on the responsibility to protect and non-State actors, the first of that kind on that subject for the Security Council.

In other situations that implys a threat to international peace and security, the Charter offers an entire series of measures, peaceful measures for settling differences, and measures through the International Criminal Court. Measures can range from mediation to coercive efforts even. All of those measures are consistent with the objective of carrying out the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and promoting their respect. What appears to us as incoherent is inaction, especially on the part of the Council, which is primarily charged with ensuring the maintenance of international peace and security.

Too often, the Council has not been up to the task of fulfilling its responsibility, because one of the permanent members used the right of veto or threatened to use it. Occasionally, the simple threat of using the right of veto discourages the search for solutions and contributes to the stagnation of conflicts. That paralysis only prolongs the suffering of civilians and diminishes the credibility of multilateralism as a means to face the challenges of international security. The most glaring example, in that regard, is the tragic situation in Syria. Spain beseeches all the permanent members

of the Security Council to commit individually and collectively to refrain from the right of veto when there is evidence of atrocity crimes. Spain has supported and signed the code of conduct proposed by Liechtenstein and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, which calls on all members of the Council to refrain from using the right of veto in cases involving mass atrocities or crimes against humanity.

To conclude, I call for a collective effort to continue building on that which unites us, which is the validity of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Those are essential to the future of all States and States' security, both within and outside of their borders. My country will continue to work with all Members of the Organization to uphold those rights.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Madam, I would like to thank the Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council for this current month for presenting this extremely important subject for a debate in the Council.

Undoubtedly, the Charter of the United Nations is not merely an international legal document. Rather, it is the result and the product of a painful experience that humankind went through. At the end of the Second World War, the world had come to realize that it is extremely important to have a number of purposes and principles, along with fundamental rules, so as to preserve international peace and security and achieve the development and protection of human rights for all times. Those principles were included in the Charter and have acquired the status of *jus cogens* and have became a charter or constitution legitimizing international action taken multilaterally by States. States are not permitted even to agree to disagree on those principles. Despite the ideals of the purposes, principles and the rules of the Charter, their real essence should be represented in their implementation and respect and the presence of the political will to carry them out.

The world has witnessed conflicts and decades-long cases of occupation and conflict. Terrorism is spreading. The use of weapons of mass destruction has occurred. There are great numbers of refugees, and we have seen the large illegal movements of migrants as a result of double standards and violations of the purposes, principles and rules of the Charter, and the fact that certain parties have asserted incorrect or distorted interpretations in order to render those principles void of their intent. Against the backdrop of the current extreme and deteriorating situation and because the United Nations is the umbrella for our international acts, based on the Charter, the Organization must assume its responsibilities and develop and reform its performance, so as to be able to continue discharging its role according to its mandate. Otherwise, the alternative will be the sidelining of the United Nations. It will not be relied upon, but rather looked upon as an Organization without credibility and unable to move or take action.

We believe that it is necessary for the political will to be present in order to commit ourselves to all the purposes and principles of the Charter, in particular the peaceful settlement of disputes. In that respect, Egypt underlines the importance of implementing the following steps. When it discusses the various issues, the Security Council must remain objective in its assessment of the dimensions of threats to international peace and security. The Security Council must adopt the natural path to address issues, in accordance to the Charter, giving priority to the peaceful means of settling disputes, while respecting national sovereignty and the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of States and taking all necessary actions to that end. Among other things, that includes asking the Secretary-General to engage his good offices, strengthening possibilities for mediation and gathering information from fact-finding committees, asking the International Court of Justice for advisory opinions, and implementating paragraph 3 of Article 36 of the Charter, which refers to legal disputes and conflicts among the parties to the International Court of Justice. If the Security Council is to be successful in that regard, it must be promptly and steadily informed and updated on cases of conflict or situations that, if left unchecked, could lead to disputes or conflicts. That in itself require would the strengthening of early-warning mechanisms at the United Nations and in the various regions, the openness of the Council, and coordination with the various regional mechanisms to avoid disputes and conflicts.

Secondly, every effort should be made to settle disputes, especially protracted ones, in particular the question of Palestine, so that the United Nations does not continue to lose the confidence of the international community and States do not seek alternative methods outside, the scope of the United Nations, to obtain or exercise their rights. It is also extremely important to prevent countries in conflict from collapsing and not to

be content with addressing them in a traditional manner or with moving slowly, which would lead to escalation or aggravation and allow terrorists to use those areas as their playground. It would then become very difficult to attain peace and security.

Thirdly, we must review the right of the veto and its — as it has been used before— to obstruct the implementation of the principles and purposes of the Charter.

Fourthly, the United Nations must develop its peacebuilding and peacekeeping activities so that it can ensure that conflicts do not erupt or re-emerge. It is also extremely important to give the United Nations added value in that regard.

Fifthly, it is extremely important to promote social and economic aspects in the work of the United Nations because they are among the fundamental pillars of the Organization's work, in particular since the international community has adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) in September 2015. In addition, it could compensate for the failure of the United Nations to address various crises and challenges that have threatened international peace and security. However, the most important problem that we face in that regard is finding the necessary funding for relevant activities and projects.

Sixthly, on the question of counter terrorism, we must prove to our peoples that the United Nations can take serious action above and beyond the mere adoption of articulate resolutions in closed chambers. We are not less capable than the Da'esh organization in planning, managing and acting. We must therefore move ahead and make tangible achievements on the ground to confront Da'esh and stop it from spreading its ideas and ideologies, recruiting fighters, using modern technology and social media, and obtaining funding from various sources. In that regard, we believe that it is extremely important to ensure coordination at the highest level, be it among the counter-terrorism bodies of the United Nations or the efforts made within and outside the Organization to counter terrorism.

Finally, the Egyptian delegation supports the expected summary of today's debate in a document to be issued by the President of the Council that would include recommendations, as outlined in the concept note and pursuant to the suggestions submitted by the various States for implementation by the Security Council and its various committees.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I thank the Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council for having convened today's debate on respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security. Following the debate convened by the Uruguayan presidency in January on the protection of civilians (see S/PV.7606), it is useful for 2016 to begin with a review of our fundamental principles. The Charter of the United Nations is first and foremost a charter of our values and the core of our action. It is a legacy to be treasured and remains as relevant as ever.

Our concept note (S/2016/103, annex) invites us to focus on the purposes and principles of the Charter and, more specifically, on its Preamble and Chapter I. On closer reading, we are struck by two challenges that remain a concern for us. First, in the wake of a devastating war, our main priority was to maintain international peace and security. That remains a concern for us 70 years later. As the concept note recalls, our Organization has made considerable progress in that regard thanks in particular to peacekeeping operations, in which uniformed personnel from 123 countries participate. Since 1948, 3,438 of them have lost their lives. We mourn those lives lost and pay special tribute to them. We owe our security to them. In basing its actions on the Charter, the Security Council must not only be able to address crises that threaten international peace and security, but also know when to withdraw once the situation has normalized.

The maintenance of international peace and security has become an increasingly complex challenge because of the rising terrorist threat. Terrorism affects all continents. It undermines our societies and even destabilizes some States. Resolution 2249 (2015) describes Da'esh as an unprecedented global threat to international peace and security. We must act together to combat terrorism with unwavering resolve, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and in line with respect for our human rights and international humanitarian law commitments.

The maintenance of international peace and security is not the only objective set out in the United Nations Charter. The Second World War was freedom's fight against disdain for the human person. That is

why those who drafted the Charter stressed respect for human rights as being inextricably linked to economic and social progress and development. That is the second concern that emerges from any reading of the purposes and principles of the Charter, as well as the Preamble. In those two areas, I believe that we have the strength to unite to confront formidable challenges. I will briefly mention a few of these.

First, humanitarian crises ushered in 2016, beginning with the tragedy in Syria, which is indeed becoming a black hole that is crushing our very values. The communiqué published in Munich by the International Syria Support Group offers a glimmer of hope that all players involved will honour all their commitments tangibly and in good faith. In Syria, as in Yemen and all situations of armed conflict, it is crucial to comply with international humanitarian law. Such compliance is not only a requirement for the peoples of the United Nations, whom the Charter stipulates that we protect, but it is also the best guarantee that the worst will not occur in conflict situations and that peace and reconciliation remain achievable. Now more than ever, it is useful to stress that respect for international humanitarian law is not a concession or a favour, but an obligation.

The second challenge is upholding the rule of law and international law. Such collective standards are recalled in Article 2 of the Charter; they seek to restrict the use of force within the boundaries of collective responsibility. It is imperative that we do our all to settle disputes by peaceful means. At The Hague on 18 April, the International Court of Justice, whose Statute is part and parcel of the Charter, will mark the seventieth anniversary of its first public hearing. I pay tribute to its central role in settling disputes and strengthening international law.

Thirdly, France remains convinced that the best protection against conflict is harmonious development of States and societies, in all its aspects, while upholding human rights. Are we rising to these challenges contained in the purposes and principles of the Charter? I think that 2015 saw two developments that restored confidence in and vigour to multilateralism and our Organization, demonstrating our ability to continue to set collective goals and norms.

The first action was the adoption by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and its 17 Goals to build a sustainable future and eradicate poverty. The second action was the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement on 12 December 2015, less than one month after the attacks that drowned the city in blood. The Venezuelan Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is presiding over this meeting, helped us by facilitating the drafting of the preamble, which underscores the intrinsic link between combating climate change, fair access to resources and eradicating poverty. Other ministers, ambassadors and facilitators contributed in an inclusive and transparent manner to a universal and ambitious Agreement to preserve our planet. They made it possible for the Paris Agreement to become the first universal environmental agreement that explicitly refers to mandatory respect for human rights.

We will be opening the legally binding Paris Agreement for signature here in New York on 22 April. It is to be hoped that the largest number of countries possible will sign the Agreement on that date, if possible at the level of Head of State and Government, and then ratify it as soon as possible. I pay tribute here to the untiring initiative and support of Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon for our collective efforts in this regard.

These last two outcomes demonstrate that the multilateralism embodied by the United Nations is still alive and overcoming the often violent paradoxes of our time. Inclusive and transparent discussions open to those who mandate pursuant to the Charter — we the peoples — have allowed us to create new collective rules within the Organization. It is now our obligation to implement them. In that context, France has proposed, with the suppport of more than 90 countries, that the permanent members voluntarily and collectively abstain from the use of the veto when mass atrocities have been perpetrated.

This year of 2016 should be a year of action to find solutions together to the conflicts in Syria, Yemen, the Middle East and Libya; to prevent others, such as in Burundi; to consolidate peace processes, such as in those in Mali and the Central African Republic; and to provide the serious and swift response called for by the most recent provocations of North Korea following a new nuclear test and the launching of a ballistic missile under the pretext of a rocket launch.

I would like to conclude my statement by quoting from the concept note before us, as follows:

> "the United Nations remains the best option we have to face, from a perspective of peace and

> cooperation, the large and complex challenges to be faced by humanity" (*S/2016/103, annex, p.2*).

This is indeed the basis of France's commitment.

Mr. Ibrahim (Malaysia): I join earlier speakers in welcoming you, Madam, to the Council and in thanking the delegation of Venezuela for convening this debate. I wish to also acknowledge the presence of the high-level representatives of Angola and Spain.

My delegation associates itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We are also pleased to have with us Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. We listened carefully to his learned views, which give us much to think about and reflect upon in this regard.

Malaysia firmly believes that all Member States must remain united in our collective resolve to uphold and respect the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Such commitment is especially urgent and crucial in the light of the challenges we face in maintaining international peace and security today. Indeed, this seems a world away from the challenges faced at the time when the Charter was first promulgated. Periodic conversations and assessments such as today's, focusing on our collective efforts in maintaining international peace and security, are decidedly a welcome and useful exercise.

In its 70 years of existence, the global multilateral system underpinned by the United Nations has paved the way for great strides by Member States in fields such as socioeconomic development, poverty eradication, the promotion and protection of human rights, countering terrorism and violent extremism and addressing environmental concerns, among others. However, the evolving nature of the threats and non-traditional security challenges faced by the United Nations, and particularly the Council, today threatens to undermine many of the gains achieved. Today the prospect of such threats and conflicts spilling over well beyond local or domestic contexts are all too real. The threats posed by the Ebola and Zika viruses, the scourge of terrorism, the heinous crime of the trafficking and smuggling of migrants, and the massive deplacement of whole populations fleeing conflict are among the key challenges that the international faces today.

At the same time, challenges of a more traditional nature remain. The nuclear test detonation and ballistic satellite launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea just some days ago shocked not only the North-East Asian region, but the entire world. We recall that upon its admission to the United Nations on 17 September 1991, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, led by First Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok-ju, stated that

> "the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as a State Member of the United Nations, will remain faithful to the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter" (*A/46/PV.1, p.33*).

It is our fervent hope that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will renew and honour that commitment. We hope that it will also consider returning to peaceful negotiations with a view to ensuring peace, security and stability in the Korean peninsula and beyond.

Since its very existence, the United Nations has contended with the question of Palestine and the struggle of the Palestinian people for their self-determination. To date, the Security Council's approach to this issue stands out as an example of selective inaction in implementing the purposes and principles of the Charter. As long as the situation of the occupied Palestinian territories remains unresolved, the United Nations will continue to be seen as lacking the necessary political will to uphold the Charter or, at the very least, stand accused of selectively applying it. In this context, the Council bears a significant responsibility. It cannot continue to be oblivious to the haunting cries of the Palestinian subjugated to increasing dehumanization policies. The longer that human rights and the rule of law are denied to the Palestinians, the more we are collectively guilty of not fully respecting and upholding the Charter. Failure to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict exacerbates radicalism and fuels violent extremism, the consequences of which are plain for all to see in the increasingly frequent terrorist attacks targeting civilians, including in capitals around the world.

I wish to recall the words of former Special Representative of the Secretary-General Mohammed Zahnoun on Somalia, who in 1992 observed,

> "When you drop a vase and it breaks into three pieces, you take the pieces and put them back together. But what do you when the vase shatters into a thousand pieces?"

Nearly a quarter century later, such words also aptly describe the conflagration in Syria, which threatens to consume not only itself, but possibly even its neighbours, should it deteriorate further. In welcoming the agreement reached by the principals of the International Syria Support Group in Munich several days ago on a nationwide ceasefire, we call on all parties to respect and implement the ceasefire without preconditions. Pending the ceasefire, we further call on them to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access throughout the country. The Syrian authorities must live up to their international obligations and demonstrate their respect for the Charter's humanitarian imperative in this regard.

At the other end of the Middle East, the outlook for the situation in Yemen seems equally bleak, with no end in sight to the acute suffering of the civilian population, who are besieged on all sides. We call on the parties to the conflict to reinvigorate efforts to resume negotiations for a peaceful settlement to the conflict. Over in Africa, Malaysia is encouraged by, among other things, the steady progress in Somalia, supported by its international partners, in progressively restoring normalcy to the country. We are also encouraged by the collective resolve of the countries of the region to make contributions to the Multinational Joint Task Force, aimed at countering Boko Haram. The collective actions of those countries, coupled with the support of the international community, stand out as an affirmation of Charter principles, including those laid down in Chapter VIII.

In conclusion, I wish to underscore Malaysia's firm belief that the Charter is a living document. We, the Member States, breathe life into it through our collective and ongoing efforts to respect and uphold its principles and purposes. We must continue to live by its ideals.

Mr. Seck (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The Senegalese delegation is pleased to see you, Madam, preside personally, in your capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, over today's open debate, which your country judiciously chose to devote the important subject of respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security

The Senegalese delegation also welcomes the participation of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon as a further demonstration of the importance of a theme being explored yet again by the Security Council, following its consideration under the Chinese presidency almost a year ago (see S/PV.7389).

My delegation associates itself with the statements to be made by the representatives of Pakistan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Kuwait on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

In addressing the seventieth session of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, said:

> "Seventy years after the creation of our Organization, we are walking in the footsteps of the founding fathers to renew our collective faith in the ideals of peace, security, development and respect for human rights. Those values inspire the principal mission of the Organization of preserving the world from the scourge of war, creating the conditions necessary to the maintenance of justice, promoting social progress and ensuring a better standard of living in greater freedom." (*A/70/PV.15, p. 17*)

These words of President Sall are the clearest possible reflection of the renewed commitment of Senegal to strict respect for the principles and purposes of the United Nations. It goes without saying that the perpetual quest for peace and security on our planet — which is one of the raison d'être of our Organization — challenges us all and requires each Member State a high awareness of the need to respect principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which is the world's constitution.

We must keep in mind that coercive actions are only a means and not an end in themselves. Thus, the success of the Organization lies more in its ability to resort to Chapter VI, on the peaceful settlement of disputes, than to Chapter VII, which is more difficult and even more costly to enforce. Senegal, a strong supporter of preventive diplomacy, therefore favours peace operations that combine these two Chapters in this their most essential meanings. Our main challenge is to adapt to a complex international environment that is constantly changing due to, among other things, the changing nature of conflict, the presence of increasingly assertive regional organizations, the proliferation of non-State armed groups and even the emergence of new, asymmetric threats such as terrorism and international health crises. This state of things requires us to make

a renewed commitment to respecting the principles and purposes that governed the creation of the United Nations, which are the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and non-resort to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

Recognition of the political and legal value of the principles contained in the Charter and the strengthening of inclusive multilateralism are prerequisites for maintaining peace and international security. It is therefore important to promote the maintenance of peace through partnership to place the action of regional organizations at the heart of peace efforts. Indeed, given the strong regional dimension of most conflicts and in view of the vital role to be played by neighbouring States in any peace process, the positive engagement of regional actors is increasingly encouraged by the United Nations, in accordance with paragraph 1, Article 52, of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

In this regard, the Security Council should further strengthen its cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, which, in addition to being already present on the ground, can contribute to ensuring respect for the sovereignty of States while promoting a preventive approach to achieving peaceful and negotiated solutions of crises. With respect to the African continent in particular, the strengthening of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, particularly the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, can help develop rapid response capabilities in the early hours of crises in order to avoid an escalation of violence.

The successes in Côte D'Ivoire, Liberia, the Comoros and Guinea Bissau speak for themselves of the essential contribution that regional organizations can make, even if the issue of funding remains a serious problem. While it is true that peace is priceless, it certainly comes at a price. States, international organizations — first and foremost the United Nations — and the private sector must contribute further to finding ways to finance peace missions throughout the world in a timely and sustainable manner.

The review of the principles and purposes of the Charter in terms of peacekeeping also leads us to the burning question of reforming the primary United Nations organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council, in order to make it more legitimate in its composition and more credible and effectiveness in its action.

In another vein, we believe that multilingualism is an important element of of the multilateral system that must continue to be respected in all activities of the United Nations system, in particular those aimed at maintaining peace and security. Indeed, multilingualism ensures the equal dignity of all cultures, contributes to the effectiveness of the principle of the legal equality of States and strengthens the democratization of global governance, of which the quest for peace is a primary directive.

I am pleased to affirm that the best guarantee of the success of our efforts to counter the multiple threats to international peace and security lies in the synergy of the actions of all sectors of the international community and the full respect of all for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we believe that the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), the Paris agreement on climate change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development will be of criticial importance. This underscores the judiciousness of the choice of theme for today's debate made by the outstanding Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council this month.

Mr. Yelchenko (Ukraine): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for convening this meeting and to underscore the particular importance of the topic of today's Security Council meeting for all Members of the United Nations family. This open debate should serve as our common contribution to the efforts of the international community to address the challenges that the world faces today.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later on behalf of the European Union.

Back in 1945, in signing the Charter of the United Nations, the founding Member States were determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to "establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law could be maintained. For those objectives, we established the purposes and principles of the United Nations. As a founding Member of the United Nations, Ukraine proudly has a stake in that process, as its delegation chaired the drafting

of the Charter's Preamble and Chapter I — Purposes and Principles — at the San Francisco Conference. In today's world, those provisions are the prerequisites to any other purposes of the United Nations.

Regrettably, we have also witnessed deviations from those principles or their misinterpretation according to convenience. Since the founding of the United Nations, the basic norms of the Charter have been violated on many occasions. Any encroachment on the Charter's provisions, any arbitrary or selective interpretation of its Articles or any actions that undermine its authority or incite disregard for the letter and the spirit of its principles represent a clear threat to international peace, with far-reaching repercussions for the well-being of all peoples.

The current developments caused by Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea and its aggression in the eastern Ukraine clearly serve to demonstrate that the violation of fundamental principles of international law by a permanent member of the Security Council is a serious threat to peace and security in Europe and the whole world. The same happened in Georgia in 2008. It happened in Crimea in 2014. It is happening now in eastern Ukraine. The neo-imperialistic ambitions of the Russian Federation and its reckless militaristic adventurism have created the worst security crisis in Europe since the end of the Second World War. In trying to justify its actions by misinterpretation of the provisions of the Charter, Russia has on numerous occasions, in the less than 25 years of its membership in the United Nations, demonstrated that it did not respect its own obligations under international law and the Charter. Furthermore, in abusing the right of the veto in the Security Council, the Russian Federation neglects its obligations, as a permanent Council member, to maintain peace and security.

According to General Assembly resolution 3314 (XXIX), of 14 December 1974, the actions undertaken by the Russian Federation in Crimea, as well as in the east of Ukraine, fall squarely under the definition of an act of aggression — a crime against international peace. Under Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, the use of force against the territorial integrity of another State is illegal; thus, no territorial acquisition can be recognized as lawful or retrospectively legitimized.

Allow me to recall that the military invasion by Russian troops began on 20 February 2014 by their blocking and seizing Ukrainian civil and military facilities, administrative buildings and infrastructure; illegitimately imposing the pro-Russian Crimean authorities; and holding the so-called referendum of 16 March 2014, at the barrel of a Russian gun. In a documentary for Russian State-run television broadcast a year later, on 15 March 2015, the Russian President admitted that the plan to annex Crimea had been launched weeks before the so-called referendum. It is no surprise that the authorities in Moscow had never intended to comply with General Assembly resolution 68/262, entitled "Territorial integrity of Ukraine", which calls upon all States to desist from any attempts to modify Ukraine's borders.

The aggression has continued in the Donbas region of Ukraine. The aggressor has thousands of troops, heavy weapons, tanks, artillery, multiple rocket launchers, missiles and other military equipment not only at our borders but also on our soil. At the same time, Russia remains a sponsor of terrorism in the east of Ukraine and continues to provide financial, material, military and technical support to the separatists in Ukraine, which are organized, controlled and funded by the Russian Federation, including, in many cases, under cover of so-called humanitarian convoys. As a result, the almost-two-year-old Russian military aggression against Ukraine has already resulted in more than 9,000 civilians dead, at least 20,000 injured and millions of forcibly displaced persons.

The aggressive war launched by Russia against Ukraine constitutes a grave breach of *jus cogens* — the peremptory norms of international law — and a flagrant disregard for the international obligations and commitments undertaken by Russia under the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and other international treaties and documents. The actions of the Russian Federation constitute yet further proof that in practice there can be no isolated violation of a single principle of the Charter, as all principles are inherently connected and interdependent. Encroachment upon any of them essentially entails a breach of the entire corpus of the principles as a whole and of the many legal rules deriving from those principles. My country considers such actions as internationally wrongful acts violating the *erga omnes* obligations of Russia and thus entailing Russia's international responsibility not only vis-à-vis Ukraine but also vis-à-vis the entire international community. Not a single State remains unconcerned in this situation, no matter how distant it might be from Ukraine geographically.

Over the past two years, Ukraine has on several occasions urged the Russian Federation to accept its international legal responsibility and demanded the termination of such wrongful acts. We proceed from the fact that Article 33 of the Charter envisages an obligation to settle any international disputes peacefully and provides a toolkit to do so. We remain committed to a peaceful resolution of this conflict. But striving to achieve that and trying to re-establish lost trust does not, however, mean that a breach of the United Nations principles should be accepted. That would be an erroneous lesson to be drawn from history and would be fatal for European and world security.

In that context, Ukraine has brought Russia's attention to the numerous facts of its aggression and proposed to resolve any existing disputes at the International Court of Justice or by ad hoc arbitration. Ukraine has also brought to the attention of the Russian Federation numerous cases of violations of international humanitarian law and breaches of its obligations as an occupying Power, as well as instances of human rights violations attributable to it due to its effective control over parts of Ukraine's territory. In response, the Russian side has expressed general, unsubstantiated denials of those facts and has refused to recognize the existence of a dispute or its responsibility.

Not only that: just a few days ago, I read the Russian Foreign Minister's statement claiming that the Russian Federation allegedly did not violate its commitments under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on security assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Let me stress that in that Memorandum, which was duly circulated to all Member States through a joint letter also signed by Mr. Lavrov, Russia undertook to respect the independence and sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine and to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of my country, as well as to affirm that none of its weapons would ever be used against Ukraine. Once again, I have become convinced that the Russian side reads international treaties in a specific manner: as with the Minsk agreements, Moscow read the Budapest Memorandum very selectively. Unfortunately, Russia has ignored all of our previous proposals to convene consultations in accordance with paragraph 6 of the Memorandum. For a signatory that is sure that it does not violate the Memorandum, why is there a concern about such consultations? Let me reiterate our call on all signatories to hold consultations without delay.

Ukraine is alarmed about Russia's unprecedented mounting militarization of occupied Crimea. To date, Russia has deployed in Crimea more than 23,000 military personnel, hundreds of battle tanks, armoured vehicles, combat aircraft and helicopters, dozens of coastal missile systems and so on. A particular danger is presented by the deployment in Crimea of potential carriers of nuclear warheads, such as warships and combat aircraft. Also worrisome is Russia's intention to refurbish the infrastructure of some Soviet-era storage facilities in Crimea for nuclear weapons.

The illegal occupation and subsequent militarization of Crimea therefore threatens to have far-reaching consequences for security not only in the Black Sea region, but in all of South Europe, as well as in North Africa and the Middle East. The ongoing events in Syria are convincing proof of that. Such a disturbing state of affairs needs to be urgently and appropriately addressed by the international community.

Against the background of intense activities undertaken by the Russian occupation authorities to transform Crimea into a huge military base, we have observed a significant deterioration of the human rights situation there. International reports provide voluminous factual information about large-scale and systematic violations of human rights in Crimea, including disappearances, killings, torture and ill-treatment. Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians who openly supported the territorial integrity of Ukraine remain in a particularly vulnerable position.

In the last week alone, we witnessed a new wave of repression and intimidation directed at Crimean Tatars. Early in the morning of 11 and 12 February, Russian security forces surrounded a number of villages across the peninsula and raided Crimean Tatar homes, breaking windows and doors and confiscating computers and other property. Some people were detained. Russian security services opened a criminal investigation against several Crimean Tatars, accusing them of being involved in extremist activities. The way it was done reminds us of the tragic days of the 1944 mass deportation of Crimean Tatars from their homeland.

Sadly, all this is happening again today. On Friday, I wrote to the President of the Security Council to draw attention to those developments. We urge

the Russian Federation, as the occupying Power, to immediately provide free and unconditional access to the peninsula for an ongoing international presence of the relevant mechanisms of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, among other international organizations.

Ukraine fully recognizes the key role the United Nations plays in maintaining international peace and security and its capacity to that end to take effective measures to prevent and remove threats to peace. In that regard, to ensure the effective implementation of the Minsk agreements and resolution 2202 (2015), proceeding from the need to involve additional instruments in order to prevent further violations of the Charter of the United Nations and guarantee lasting peace and stability in certain areas of the Luhansk and Donetsk regions of Ukraine, we continue to insist that the deployment of a United Nations international peacekeeping operation in the territory of Ukraine could be an important step towards an effective solution for the conflict unleashed by the Russian Federation against my country.

The Charter has withstood dramatic changes in international relations and proved its key place in today's global architecture as the primary international legal instrument for preserving international peace, with far-reaching effects for the well-being of all peoples. Adherence to the principles embodied in the Charter is the best safeguard for the implementation of all other international legal documents and, ultimately, for the international rule of law. We trust that the General Assembly, the Security Council and world leaders will exert every effort and explore every opportunity to restore respect for the United Nations Charter.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Aristotle: "It is not enough to win a war; it is more important to organize the peace." Today, seven decades after the end of the Second World War and the adoption of the United Nations Charter, we must not forget the Charter's primary purpose — to maintain international peace and security. Unless the Charter is respected, there will be no peace or security in the world. Unless the Charter is respected, chaos and violence will prevail. The Charter must be respected. Order must be restored. Violations of the Charter must not go unpunished.

Mr. Van Bohemen (New Zealand): I welcome you, Foreign Minister Rodríguez Gómez, as our President, and I also welcome the presence of Ministers from Angola and Spain. We thank Venezuela for organizing today's open debate. We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing, which we thoroughly endorse.

The international community today faces more concurrent crises, and of greater complexity, than at any time since the creation of the United Nations. In that sense, the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security is more relevant and necessary than ever. But the challenges we face — intractable civil wars, entrenched local and regional politics, sophisticated and well-resourced transnational terrorist networks — are very different from those envisaged at the time of the establishment of the United Nations.

The Council has responded to those dynamic and evolving threats by adapting its response — for example, through the evolution of peacekeeping, the development of peacebuilding and of protection-of-civilians mandates, the deployment of political missions and innovative responses to the emergence of regional health emergencies. The Council can claim many achievements as a result, in terms of conflicts resolved and lives saved.

But the Council needs to continue developing and evolving its approach if it is to be effective in fulfilling its mandate. In recent years, its capacity to do so has been sorely tested. The Council did not create the complex conflicts that dominate the international landscape today. But its ability to act decisively to prevent, manage and, in some cases, even respond to those crises has often been found wanting. The Council has been slow to act to prevent clearly emerging crises. And political divisions within the Council have hamstrung its response to full blown crises — Syria being the most obvious recent example. We Council members can and must do better. New Zealand is focused on doing what it can to address those shortcomings. Today I wish to focus on five areas in which we believe the Council needs to improve its game.

First, we need a more genuine focus on practical problem-solving. For permanent and elected members alike, Council membership brings with it the solemn responsibility for preventing and resolving conflict. Yet during our time in the Council, very few of the discussions in which we have participated could be characterized as genuine attempts at problem resolution. What we have seen instead are set-piece statements,

rigid positioning and attempts to publicly embarrass and undermine other Council members, even within our so-called informal consultations. Put simply, few Council members appear to be coming to the Chamber or to the Consultations Room with ideas on how to solve problems or even to engage seriously on them. While we are all culpable, the worst offenders are those who bear the greatest responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations— the permanent members. That must change. New Zealand is focused on practical steps that can be taken to achieve even modest progress in improving the dynamics and performance of the Council. As we set out during our presidency in July of last year, we will continue to push for more informal and unscripted conversations focused on agreeing on pragmatic and constructive solutions. Ultimately, what is required is a change of culture and of mindset.

Secondly, the Council must live up to its rhetoric on conflict prevention. The Council currently finds it extraordinarily difficult to respond quickly and effectively to emerging crises. For example, despite growing evidence of a crisis, it took the Council almost six months to respond to the calls by New Zealand and some others for a Council visiting mission to Burundi. By the time the Council did respond, the scope for the mission to have a meaningful impact had shrunk dramatically. Syria presents an even starker example of thit failure. For five years, the Council has remained almost completely passive in the face of the deepening conflict, paralysed by disagreements among its permanent members. The international community and the Syrian people are paying the price for that failure, and will continue to do so for decades to come. Seven years after its last resolution on the matter, the Council remains unable to agree a collective response to the growing instability in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories and the steady erosion of a basis for a negotiated peace.

The Council has a clear responsibility to act in such situations, and it has a range of tools at its disposal for doing so. But it remains strangely reluctant to use them, with discussions on preventive action generally becoming hostage to national or bilateral interests, or bogged down in false dichotomies between intervention and deference to sovereignty. National sovereignty must be respected, but it is not the only or paramount principle in the Charter. We must not allow it to be used as a shield by those who brutalize their own populations and undermine regional and global security. Those that defend such perpetrators on this basis bring discredit upon themselves and the Council.

It must be possible for the Council to conceive of ways of engaging early to de-escalate and resolve crises, ways that are effective, respectful of sovereignty and sensitive to regional leadership. As we have seen, the consequences of the Council's failure to act in preventive mode can have far more devastating consequences for a country's sovereignty. Part of this challenge lies in finding better and more collaborative ways of working with key regional partners such as the African Union.

Thirdly, we need to sharpen the effectiveness of the tools available to the Council to discharge its mandate. The report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) represents an important opportunity in this regard. Over the balance of this year we will work with Council colleagues to implement key recommendations to improve the effectiveness of Council mandates, including through greater prioritization and sequencing of tasks and deployments. We will also continue to advance our specific proposals regarding enhanced engagement with troop contributors and other key stakeholders in the mandate process and enabling more responsible monitoring and management of risk and performance through enhanced situational awareness.

As I noted during last Thursday's debate on the sanctions committees (see S/PV.7620), we can also improve the effectiveness of sanctions measures by improving the functioning of our subsidiary bodies. This means more timely and informed decision-making; clear strategic direction; and flexibility to respond to changing circumstances.

Fourthly, we need to encourage a greater culture of collective decision-making or burden-sharing. The Council continues to hamper its work by unnecessary and outdated procedural constraints and rigidities. There needs to be more scope for all 15 Council members to make a substantive contribution and for this to be regarded as a normal and natural way of operating.

Fifthly, the Council must be more consistent in supporting compliance with the international rules to which we have all committed ourselves.

The Charter of the United Nations places the Council at the centre of a rules-based international

order. It must respond decisively in instances where such rules are undermined and flouted, such as the recent nuclear test and ballistic-missile launch by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or of gross and systematic abuses of international humanitarian law.

It is particularly important in this regard for the Council to follow through on its own decisions. We need to be more honest in assessing their effective implementation and determining our response where they have been defied or neglected, or have proved ineffective or mistaken. This is as true of peacekeeping mandates and sanctions measures as it is of International Criminal Court referrals or the obligations imposed by the Council on parties to a conflict.

To conclude, we cannot afford to lose sight of the Council's core purpose and its obligation to the international community and to the millions of human beings whose lives are being distorted by conflict. The wider United Nations membership wants to see the Council delivering better on its primary mandate of maintaining international peace and security, and New Zealand does too. That is why we want to work with all Council members and other interested Members of the Organization in making a genuine collective effort focused on solving the problems that the Council is tasked with confronting.

Mr. Rycroft (United Kingdom): I wish to thank you, Madam President, for having convened this debate and for being with us in person today. I want to join others in thanking the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing, all of which I agree with, and for his leadership of the Human Rights Up Front initiative.

The Security Council's primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security is enshrined in the Charter. That puts us, as my New Zealand colleague has just said, at the center of the rules-based international system. We face new threats that the founders of the United Nations did not foresee, but the responsibility that the Council holds remains. It is a responsibility that empowers us to take a range of measures, including force, should the situation on a particular issue or in a particular country threaten international peace and security. The only question to be debated today is how we do so.

The Article of the Charter that you, Madam President, mentioned — paragraph 7, Article 2 — is explicit in not prejudicing "the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII".

Threats to international peace and security have changed; they now come mainly from intra-State instability that spreads far beyond national borders. Weak or failing States and non-State actors now pose our greatest challenge. As the situation in Syria shows, if they are left unaddressed, these threats undermine both the rights of States and the rights of people.

In response, we should not let outdated interpretations of the Charter be used to excuse inaction, still less to justify action that makes the situation worse. Sadly, there are some in the Council that do precisely that: members that claim the primacy of sovereignty above all else, or that would rather abuse the power of the veto and ignore the responsibility conferred on the Council by the Charter, or that disregard efforts to restrain the use of the veto, including through the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group's code of conduct, which the Spanish Minister rightly highlighted and which the United Kingdom is proud to commit to.

Ironically, it is those members of the Council that abuse sovereignty the most. Look at the invasion and illegal annexation of Crimea two years ago. This was the most egregious violation of sovereignty in recent memory. That it was perpetrated by a permanent member of the Council, a member that claims to uphold the principles of the Charter, makes it even more unacceptable still. I reaffirm in this Chamber the United Kingdom's full support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and I reassert our commitment to the return of Crimea to its rightful place as part of Ukraine.

In the light of the new threats that we face, our response needs to be commensurate with the purposes and principles of the Charter. In doing so, the Council can bolster sovereignty. As the Secretary-General argued recently in Cambridge, England, we need to recognize that you cannot have true sovereignty without respecting the human rights of the people you govern, or, as he said today, that it is violence and conflict, not our attempts to help Member States prevent it, that threaten States' sovereignty. It is violations of human rights by the State that erode the legitimacy of the State.

The concept of sovereignty has not stood still; we no longer accept the medieval view that the sovereign owns everything and is the State. In the twenty-first century, sovereignty has to amount to a contract between governed and Government, and, crucially,

this contract depends in part on respect for human rights. When human rights are violated and abused, when basic freedoms are ignored, when a leader loses legitimacy, peace and security can be threatened and sovereignty is put at risk. We saw this for ourselves when we visited Burundi last month; we heard stories of summary executions, mass graves and sexual violence. These warning signs should be all too familiar to the Council. We must all know by now that if they are left unchecked, the risk to sovereignty will not come from too much action by the Council but from the destabilizing consequences of too little.

If we are inactive, violence could spill across borders, providing space for extremism to flourish, undermining the rule of law and eroding respect for human rights. That is exactly what has happened for nearly six years in Syria. Has a heavier price ever been paid for such a myopic interpretation of the Charter of the United Nations? As a consequence, a quarter of million people are dead, and millions upon millions have fled their homes. Over 1 million people now live their lives under siege, with many facing starvation. We should all welcome the commitment made by the International Syria Support Group in calling for a cessation of hostilities last week. It is long overdue. However, it will only succeed if the Syrian regime and its backers change their behaviour, stop the bombing, observe the ceasefire and allow humanitarian access — in short, if they live up to their obligations.

Let me conclude with this final reflection: what would our world look like if we really believed in an outdated view of sovereignty — an extreme view in which sovereignty trumped all principles in international relations and international law? The Security Council agenda would be thin. It would be a world where the Council would not even attempt to prevent calamity in Burundi; where peacekeeping operations would be far fewer in number; where sanctions would never be used to encourage regimes towards more acceptable behaviour; where threats of proliferation went unchecked; where the most serious crimes of concern to the international community went unpunished. There would be impunity and no accountability. How could international justice function at all?

It would be a world where we failed to uphold even the first Article of the Charter, to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace. I am glad that we do not live in that world. We live in a world — for all its imperfections and challenges — where individuals can demand rights and are entitled to hold their Governments to account. We live in a world where old backward-looking concepts of sovereignty no longer provide stability or peace and security. We live in a world in which the Charter, written 70 years ago, still applies exactly as it was meant, respecting the rights of States and their peoples and granting the Council the authority to take enforcement action to maintain international peace and security.

Mr. Rosselli (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I wish to thank you, Madam, for being here to lead our debate. I would also like to recognize the presence of various Ministers and State Secretaries here today from various Member States of the United Nations. Furthermore, I would like to thank the President of the Council for having organized this open debate, as well as Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his informative briefing.

The theme "Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security" is particularly relevant for my country, considering its long tradition of upholding international law and its firm conviction of the need for an effective multilateral system capable of addressing global issues. As a founding Member of the United Nations, Uruguay has always called for the full observance of the purposes and principles enshrined in the San Francisco Charter, which we view as a complex framework of fundamental rights and obligations. They should be maintained, as they are essential to the achievement of international peace and security. Uruguay believes that all of those purposes and principles remain fully valid today, and that they are fundamental pillars on which the international system stands. Respect for the purposes and principles is conveyed through peaceful coexistence and good relations between States, and must be addressed as a whole, in particular as their interpretation or partial use may lead to results that constitute a departure from the Organization's objective to maintain international peace and security.

Legal principles such as the sovereign equality of States, the fulfilment in good faith of international obligations, territorial integrity, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the non-use of force are binding and must be observed in their entirety. That is essential to fulfilling one of the purposes of the Organization, that is, to save

succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We have been firm and consistent defenders of each and every one of those principles, and have called for them to be respected whenever they have been challenged. A traditional aspect of my country's foreign policy is the rejection of the threat and the use of force, and the search for peaceful means to resolve conflicts that threaten international peace and security. For that reason, Uruguay has generously offered to join the Organization's peacekeeping operations where such was necessary to maintain international peace and security, in accordance with the mandate of the Charter.

We have also reaffirmed the right to self-determination of peoples in all decolonization processes, including those that have not yet been concluded. We have called for full respect for State sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of States when State actions were not conducted in accordance with United Nations standards, in particular those that regulate the powers of the Security Council. For Uruguay, respect for international law and the rule of law, at both the national and international levels, is a fundamental guarantee. But they are only meaningful when their benefits reach the inhabitants of each State. Those individuals have rights, not only by virtue of their nationality, but first and foremost by virtue of the simple fact that they are human. One of the purposes enshrined in the Charter is the promotion and encouragement of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. The United Nations therefore, and the Security Council in particular, is called upon to play a key role while placing human rights and the dignity of persons at the centre of the Organization's actions.

The increasing number of violations of those rights, which we witness every day in different parts of the world, as well as recurring widespread attacks on civilians in armed conflict, undermine the fulfilment of the purposes and principles on which the Organization is based. It is for that reason that the reaffirmation of those principles, which were established at the end of the Second World War, should certainly take into consideration the evolution of international realities as well as the evolution of the United Nations system, international treaties and State practices.

We believe that it would be a mistake to pretend that a broad interpretation of the principles of State sovereignty and non-intervention could serve as justification for any action taken by a State within its borders that violate other principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Non-interference in the internal affairs of States is a valid and necessary principle in relations among States. However, that principle might become an exception of domestic jurisdiction that releases the State from the obligation to comply with its international obligations.

The area of human rights could serve as the paradigm for the evolution of the multilateral system as the role of the international community grows in importance in terms of protection. Obviously, States continue to shoulder the main responsibility for ensuring observance of the fundamental rights of their citizens. But the international community has gradually established an international system to promote and protect human rights through the development of norms, standards of conventional international law, multilateral bodies and special procedures to which the Member States of the United Nations are subject. That development has taken place in accordance with Charter principles when it comes to the mandates of the United Nations, in particular the provisions of Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter. The establishment of the Human Rights Council, empowered to examine any human rights violation, even when the countries concerned disagree, is an illustration of that healthy development.

Therefore, without attempting to erode in the slightest the original meaning of the principle of non-intervention, Uruguay has always defended, both in this forum as well as in Latin America, its understanding that the principle cannot be used to undermine the moral and legal duty to protect people, in particular from massive atrocities such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or ethnic cleansing. In that connection, it is essential to end impunity for those who commit such atrocities. In such cases, an extreme interpretation of sovereignty transforms it into impunity and thus puts our most essential values and human rights at risk. The concept of sovereignty implies responsibilities as well as rights. And one of sovereignty's most essential obligations is the protection of the people.

We recognize that it is States that bear the primary responsibility for protecting their peoples. However, when they do not protect them, and when the threat of atrocities is imminent, the international community must abandon non-intervention and become involved. It cannot stand by and has a duty to act to defend the greater good. The Security Council has a particular

responsibility in that regard and must be ready to resort to every instrument that the Charter has put it at its disposal. But we must also underscore the fact that it is the Council's responsibility to act in a concerted fashion in cases of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

As a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Uruguay therefore believes that it is vital that all States Members of the United Nations agree to a code of conduct that limits the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities. Similarly, given the indivisible and interdependent nature of human rights, we believe their protection and promotion are directly linked to people's integral development and potential for development.

Uruguay reiterates its belief in the importance of continuing to work to build an effective multilateral United Nations system capable of responding rapidly and consistently to today's challenges — a system that provides the guarantees needed to ensure that individual human rights are respected and that millions do not die each year in armed conflict or from a lack of food or basic services; a system that does not foster poverty or put the interests of the strong above those of the weak.

Uruguay attaches particular importance to the principle, enshrined in the Charter, that international disputes should be resolved by peaceful means based on international law. In that context, we reaffirm the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and the mechanisms based on it designed to tackle the chief threats to international peace and security. It is those mechanisms, which include activities aimed at preventing, managing and resolving conflicts, that will enable us to achieve sustainable and lasting peace.

We believe that regional and subregional organizations have an important role to play in that regard. While we acknowledge the primary role that the Charter assigns to the Security Council the difficult task of maintaining international peace and security, we are also aware of the complementary role in that area that it gives to such organizations as the Organization of American States, of which Uruguay is a founding member, as well as of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Union of South American Nations and the Southern Common Market, organizations in which cooperation and political consultation have played a major role in preventing conflict peacefully resolving disputes. Regional and subregional organizations are well positioned to understand the challenges and dynamics to which countries in their regions, with their geographical, cultural and historical proximity, are exposed. Within their mandates, they can make a very effective contribution to the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts.

Uruguay reaffirms its strong and unequivocal commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter drawn up in San Francisco. We intend to work in close and constructive cooperation with the other members of the Council in our efforts to consistently defend the purposes and principles of the Charter and preserve its integrity, with the aim of building a more peaceful, just and equitable world.

Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to welcome you to the United Nations, Madam President, and to congratulate you on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela's presidency of the Council for the month of February.

(*spoke in English*)

I would like to begin by recalling the debate we had in the Council exactly a year ago on a very similar topic (see S/PV.7389). On that occasion, the-then Permanent Representative of Austria, Ambassador Martin Sajdik, made a statement on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Rule of Law, of which Japan is a member. He stated that we should reaffirm our commitment to all the purposes and the principles of the Charter of the United Nations — I repeat, all the purposes and principles — and should not do so selectively. We cannot pick and choose. I would like to echo his words today. In that connection, I have noticed in past Council debates that few members have mentioned the principle of fulfilling one's obligations under the Charter, expressed specifically in paragraph 2, Article 2.

In the space of just one month, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted its fourth nuclear test and launched a ballistic missile, in clear and flagrant violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. Keeping the principle of fulfilling our obligations under the Charter in mind, we can see that this is not merely a violation of Council resolutions; it is also a totally unacceptable challenge to the Charter itself. Such striking examples show how important it is that we take concrete action to condemn these violations. In doing so, we maintain the authority and credibility of the United Nations. I would like to take this occasion

to urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with the relevant Security Council resolutions and with its international commitments, including its obligations under the Charter.

I have been very encouraged today by the statements made by several delegations so far on that specific point. In that connection, I would like to reiterate a point I made in this Chamber last week, when we discussed general issues related to sanctions under the Venezuelan presidency (see S/PV.7620). In the words of the report issued last year by the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1874 (2009),

> "The Panel continues to observe Member States' lack of implementation of the Security Council resolutions, noting that inaction and low reporting levels may be due to lack of will, technical capacity and/or issues within their domestic legal systems." (*S/2015/131, annex*)

I would like to take this opportunity to call on all Member States, including all of us on the Council, to fulfil our own obligations under Security Council resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations. That is an important basis of the rule of law.

I welcome the reference in the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) to the importance of the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is critical to settle disputes by peaceful means, based on international law and not by force or coercion. In its most visible form, the rule of law is embodied in judicial organs. By applying international law, judicial organs such as international courts disentangle complicated disputes and offer legal solutions. Everyone in this Chamber agrees that judicial bodies are important, but I cannot help noticing that Member States, including my own, devote a lot of energy to electing the judges of those bodies. We should also be very active in actually making use of them.

Take the International Court of Justice as an example. For seven decades, the Court has played a constructive role in the field of the peaceful settlement of international disputes through its resolution of 150 cases. In that context, I would like to reiterate my Government's plea for more Member States to accept the Court's compulsory jurisdiction. For Member States that have not yet done so, I would like to remind them of the existence of the *Handbook of the International Court of Justice*, which is available on the Court's website. The *Handbook*, which is co-authored by seven member States led by Switzerland, including Japan, can serve as a useful reference.

I would like to emphasize that the rule of law should also be respected on the oceans and seas. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), based in Hamburg, Germany, can be a very effective legal mechanism to that end. I am pleased to see that 23 cases have been referred to ITLOS in its 20-year history, including four disputes involving my country, Japan. At the same time, I believe that ITLOS has large potential due to its excellent judges, capable staff members of the Registry and biannual budget of more than €18 million. I take this opportunity to call for active utilization of the Tribunal to ensure the rule of law on the seas.

Finally, let me refer to the Security Council and its relations with the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC, the first permanent international criminal court, is one of the most effective tools available to the Council to end impunity, thereby contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security. The Council can do more to enhance cooperation and communication with the ICC.

I would like to end my statement by reaffirming Japan's determination to continue on its path, together with the United Nations, so that all the purposes and principles of the Charter are duly observed in the actual world.

Mr. Liu Jieyi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China commends the initiative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to convene today's open debate. We are pleased to see you, Madam Minister, presiding over this meeting here in New York. I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

At present, international affairs are undergoing an historic, accelerated process of change. Humankind is facing unprecedented development opportunities and newly emerging threats and challenges. The Charter of the United Nations arose from the ravages of the Second World War. It reflected humankind's profound retrospection on the two world wars and charted a grand blueprint whereby the people of the planet could work together to build a beautiful world.

In today's world, the Charter remains a tower of strength of great vitality and unmitigated relevance. The international community must bear history firmly in mind, steadfastly preserve the fruits of the victorious anti-fascist world war and firmly defend the purposes

and principles of the Charter of the United Nations by focusing on the following areas.

First, we must work vigorously to make international relations more democratic and subject them to more effective rule of law. Important principles enshrined in the Charter — including respect for national sovereignty, territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interference in the internal affairs of States — are the cornerstones of modern international law and international relations. Our only option is to reinforce them, not weaken them.

It is imperative to adhere to the five principles of peaceful coexistence in international relations and respect each country's prerogative to choose its own development path and social system independently. It is imperative to uphold the sovereign equality of all States entitled to participate in the formulation of international rules and to exercise their rights under the law on an equal footing. The world's destiny must remain in the hands of all peoples. International justice and equality must be upheld. Uniform rules must be applied in distinguishing between right and wrong, promoting peace and pursuing development. It is imperative to abide by international law and universally agreed basic norms of international relations, and give full play to the important role of the United Nations in international affairs, while safeguarding the mandate and authority of the Security Council in matters involving international peace and security.

Secondly, we should vigorously promote international cooperation in all its aspects. We must do away with all forms of Cold War mentality and predilections for a zero-sum game, and instead embrace the new notions of win-win for multi-stakeholders and winning for all, so as to forge global partnerships at the international and regional levels, weave cooperation into all aspects of international interactions in the political, economic, security and cultural domains, and build a human community of common destiny, characterized by everyone pulling together in the same boat and the convergence of interests on an equal footing. In nation to nation interactions, States should respect one and other, treat each other as equals and work together for the good of all. All parties should, through consultation and cooperation, address major international and regional issues in order to properly deal with regional conflicts, terrorism and other traditional and non-traditional security threats.

Thirdly, we should vigorously promote inclusion, mutual learning and common development. We must respect the diversity of civilizations, uphold openness and inclusiveness, cross-fertilize through exchanges and mutual benchmarking, and move forward by seeking common ground while preserving our differences. We must safeguard and develop an open world economy, promote robust, sustainable and balanced growth, improve global economic governance and realize universal prosperity throughout the world. We must help each other to our mutual benefit with a view to effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). We must join hands in seeking a way forward in building a global ecological civilization aimed at the harmonious coexistence of man and nature in order to realize the sustainable development of the world and the overall development of humankind.

As a founding Member of the United Nations and a permanent member of the Council, China was the first country to sign the Charter of the United Nations. Over the decades, China has contributed positively to defending the purposes and principles of the Charter and promoting the peace, progress and development of humankind. While attending the summits marking the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, Chinese President Xi Jinping comprehensively elaborated the concept of building new international relations focused on cooperation for a win-win situation. He proposed forging partnerships based on consultation and accommodation on an equal footing; building a security landscape of justice and fairness by all and for all; pursuing prospects for open, innovative, inclusive and mutually beneficial development; promoting exchange among civilizations that seeks harmony, respects diversity and embraces and assimilates equitable sustenance; constructing an ecosystem that respects nature and seeks green development; and, by integrating these five elements, elaborating an overall agenda and pathway of seeking one human community of common destiny.

That call by China is in line with and builds on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and transcends the purview of the traditional theory of international relations in an innovative spirit. More importantly, it is a coherent fusion between the Chinese dream of peace, development and cooperation to the benefit of all, on the one hand, and the well-being of all peoples of the world, on the other. It is in tune

with the trend of the times, in line with the common interest of all nations, and of great significance to international peace and security. It is a manifestation of China's responsibility and commitment as a permanent member of the Council and a large developing country.

This year is the first of the implementation of the outcomes of the seventieth anniversary summits of the United Nations and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This pivotal opportunity should be seized by the international community in pursuing the noble cause of world peace and development. China stands ready to work with the United Nations and its membership, continue to safeguard the international order and international system built around the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, join hands to forge new international relations characterized by cooperation to the benefit of all, build a community of common destiny with unity of purpose, and make ever greater contributions to the peace, development and the progress of humankind.

Mr. Pressman (United States of America): In 1945, at the conclusion of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, United States President Harry Truman reflected on the just-completed Charter of the United Nations and called it

> "a declaration of great faith by the nations on this Earth — faith that war is not inevitable, faith that peace can be maintained".

It was a feat unparalleled in history for the representatives of 50 nations to be able to come together after the world's most devastating conflict and imagine a new international order rooted in peaceful cooperation and respect for human rights. In the 70 years that followed, we have worked to uphold this declaration of faith, welcoming 143 new Member States into the United Nations, avoiding a third world war and expanding the promise of freedom and democracy to millions. And yet, we have not fully transformed our faith into a world without tyranny, a world without strife and a world without poverty — the responsibility that our predecessors in San Francisco passed to us.

Some seem to suggest that the solution is one of retrenchment in which we would all play a more hands-off role in responding to drivers of conflict, and in which we dismiss respect for the dignity and human rights of individuals as a matter of purely domestic concern. The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, however, impel us to do the opposite. Animating the United Nations Charter is a concern for the dignity of every person, regardless of nationality. Respect for political independence and sovereignty cannot mean turning a blind eye to oppression, intimidation and abuse. Sovereignty is an important aspect of States, of course, but as the Secretary-General has emphasized today and as he has said in the past,

> "the less sovereignty is viewed as a wall or a shield, the better our prospects will be for protecting people and solving our shared problems".

It is the United Nations Charter that leads us to recognize the nexus between human rights and the maintenance of international peace and security. It is the United Nations Charter that leads us to act decisively using all of the tools at our disposal to respond to threats to international peace and security, and it is the United Nations Charter that calls on us to ensure that the Council keeps pace with emerging threats. We must recommit to, not retreat from, those principles today. That means demanding that Russia end its illegal occupation of Crimea and cease support for separatists intent on seizing even more of Ukraine, in clear violation of the Charter of the United Nations. It also means recognizing that, in carrying out our responsibility to maintain international peace and security, that responsibility includes promoting respect for human rights and those institutions necessary to safeguard freedom.

As we have seen on far too many occasions, widespread human rights violations and abuses can themselves pose a threat to international peace and security, and regimes that flagrantly violate the universally recognized human rights of their own people often show similar contempt for the universal principles that help maintain our shared security. Take North Korea, for example, where the Government imprisons and tortures citizens for the so-called crime of owning foreign films, and where 80,000 to 120,000 political prisoners are starved and beaten to death in detention camps. Just as North Korea treats its citizens with disdain, the regime also flouts the resolutions of the Security Council on its nuclear and ballistic missile activities while threatening its neighbours with annihilation. In Syria, the Al-Assad regime's brutal response to peaceful political protest has devolved into horrific attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, forced displacement and starvation. The Syrian Government's inability and unwillingness to

protect its citizens — indeed, its predilection to do the opposite — has given armed extremist groups the space to operate with impunity.

The very first Article, Article 1, of the Charter of the United Nations, makes clear that the central purpose of the United Nations is "promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all". In this clause, those drafting the Charter recognized that repressive Governments that seek to choke off freedom of expression, stifle the media and prevent citizens from determining their own political future undermine an international system based on peaceful cooperation among the world's peoples. Governments in which people can hold their leaders accountable through elections and an active civil society and Governments in which an independent judiciary can serve as a check on executive authority are Governments that can help prevent, rather than create threats to international peace and security.

It is by supporting strong democratic institutions that we help prevent the horrors of genocide or the emergence of ungoverned spaces where terrorist organizations may thrive. The pursuit of these values is not in tension with the purposes and principles of the United Nations; it is precisely these values that animate the United Nations. Despite these purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter, in the real world we are witnessing the opposite trend — a sustained and seemingly contagious effort to silence, crack down and shut down space for civil society around the world, rather than embracing the idea that empowered citizens can work together to make sure the Governments work for people.

Too many Governments are passing legislation and taking administrative actions designed to keep people scared and silent, and to keep them from speaking out against abuses of power or from undertaking any political activity whatsoever, including by keeping leaders of the peaceful political opposition imprisoned for exercising fundamental freedoms. They inundate civil society organizations with frivolous prosecutions and try to block what little funding exists to sustain these groups. They accuse human rights defenders and civil society organizations and those who support them of carrying out nefarious foreign agendas or even committing treason.

When regimes crack down on the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms, these steps can be an indicator, and too often a harbinger, of worse violations to come. We cannot and should not wait to speak out until Governments escalate to the point of slaughtering their own people, as we saw in Rwanda, or to the point that a regime employs medieval siege tactics to starve its own people, as we see today in Syria. Borders cannot blind us to our responsibilities as a Council, or as people with conscience. We must respect sovereignty, but so too must we recognize the relationship among democratic processes, freedom, civil society, systematic violations of human rights and threats to international peace and security.

Many of the items on the Council's agenda began when Governments started to denigrate the dignity of and erode the enjoyment of rights for their people. These Governments all too often argue that the Charter exempts them from criticism and that we must blind ourselves to internal oppression, even where systematic repression can be directly connected to broader regional and international security. To do so would ignore the lessons that led us to adopt the Charter of the United Nations in the first place.

While we must be guided by the principle of the sovereign equality of States enshrined in the Charter, we cannot let ourselves become so afraid of encroaching on State prerogatives as to prevent us from acting to respond to the world's real and emerging threats, even if they look different than the threats the founders of the Organization confronted 70 years ago. Indeed, we must continue to update our understanding of threats to keep pace with the world around us, and we have made important strides in doing so, from addressing public health crises like Ebola to countering the movement of foreign terrorist fighters to new entities like the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant. The Security Council must be prepared to recognize these kinds of new threats, and when the Security Council determines the existence of a threat to international peace and security, we must use the tools at our disposal to act decisively.

At times, the Council has appropriately relied upon swift mediation, under the good offices of the Secretary-General, or upon cooperation with regional organizations, consistent with Chapter VIII, to forestall conflicts. Yet we have also seen the value that comes from the Council acting to impose sanctions, create tribunals and deploy peacekeeping missions. Beginning in 2006, the Council responded to increasing concerns about Iran's nuclear programme by adopting a robust sanctions regime. The willingness of Member States to

work together to carry out their obligation to implement and to enforce those resolutions created an opportunity to bring them around to the negotiating table to address the international community's concerns. Those efforts resulted in the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the provisions of which, through full and complete implementation, will continue to ensure that Iran does not develop a nuclear weapon. That diplomatic breakthrough would not have been possible had the Council had not taken strong and decisive action to address Iran's nuclear activity.

I want to conclude with another prescient remark that President Truman made in his address to delegates in San Francisco. He noted that

> "Nations, like individuals, must know the truth if they would be free — must read and hear the truth, learn and teach the truth."

We in the Security Council, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, should take that lesson to heart. When we see Governments whose actions contribute to global instability, or we observe new threats to international peace and security, we, as Council members, must speak the truth. We must see the truth that is concealed by arguments that seek to distort and manipulate the purposes and principles of the Charter in an attempt to prevent the United Nations and the Council from tackling the global challenges that it was meant to confront. Those who had the foresight to create the United Nations would demand nothing less, as do the citizens of the world who bear the consequences when we fail to live up to that moral ambition.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the convening of today's discussion at the initiative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Madam President, as well as your personal presiding over this Council meeting. A useful discussion on the same theme took place a year ago on the initiative of China (see S/PV.7389). It demonstrated that almost no Member State remains indifferent to the issue. And as of today, the discussion is far from being exhausted.

The basic code of conduct for States in the world is provided by the compilation of principles and rules reflected in the Charter of the United Nations — such as the independence and sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their internal affairs, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the right of peoples to self-determination. Nobody, it would seem, calls into question the immutable nature of the principles of the Charter.

We are convinced that, today as well, many parties reaffirm their commitment to them. However, in practice those principles are not always upheld. Seventy years after the end of the Second World War, the basic principles that should serve as a backbone for the system of international relations are becoming for some an awkward obstacle and, consequently, are subject to various types of interpretations, or are simply circumvented. That inevitably leads to a situation in which States are experiencing the explosive situations that at the time created the conditions for world wars and which the founders of the United Nations wanted to exclude once and for all by creating a unified code of conduct for all.

Today we cannot turn a blind eye to what is happening as a result of undisguised interventions in the internal affairs of States through support for illicit changes of power or the forcible imposition of foreign cultural or social norms. We all clearly saw how, from the spark of popular unrest in Libya, through allegedly disinterested outside assistance, a fire was fuelled that destroyed the State, leaving in its place ashes and chaos. The same sort of illicit intervention, involving illegitimate air strikes or the provision of weapons to non-Government armed forces, led to a rise in violent extremism and radicalization in Syria, which eventually resulted in the emergence and strengthening of such terrible phenomena as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Sham.

The Russian delegation is seriously concerned about the most recent aggressive actions of the Turkish Government, the massive shelling in neighbourhoods of Syria on the border, as well as the possible movement into Syria of fresh groups of mercenaries who seek to join Jabhat Al-Nusra, Al-Qaida and other terrorist organizations. The consequences of the interventions in Libya and Syria are striking by virtue of their scale, as they have caused atrocious suffering to civilians, the desecration of the cultural heritage of humankind and unprecedented migrant flows.

We support the declared goal of today's meeting, namely, the commitment to the inviolability of the purposes and principles of the Charter, a well as the effort to find ways to involve States in their effective implementation. We do indeed need to agree on how,

on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations, joint risk management will be carried out in a context of increasingly complex international relations. We will not succeed in achieving that purpose without upholding the system of fundamental principles that I have mentioned.

Those endeavours should include decisive measures to do away with double standards in international politics and to strengthen the role of the Security Council as the primary body charged with agreeing on collective approaches, based on respect for the cultural and civilizational diversity of the contemporary world.

The past year, since the Security Council meeting in February 2015, has served to confirm that positive results can be achieved when members of the Council come together in the interests of finding consolidated positions in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter. That was the very foundation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme, which allowed us to get rid of one of the most explosive sources of conflict in the Middle and Near East. The destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons arsenal was successfully carried out, important decisions were made regarding countering terrorism and its financing, and progress was achieved in the Syrian settlement. A new comprehensive Paris Agreement has been drawn up on the issue of climate change.

Today three delegations referred to the Ukrainian crisis. We think that blatant interference in the internal affairs of Ukraine took place through support from the outside aimed at undertaking an anti-constitutional coup d'état in 2014. There is well-known evidence of that: we might recall the brazenness of high-ranking American officials, sponsors of Kyiv, which was recently fully unmasked in the French documentary film entitled *Ukraine: Masks of the Revolution*. The coup led to a degradation in the statehood of the country, radicalization, an increase in nationalism and numerous casualties.

We would like to recall that, against the backdrop of that crisis, what happened in Crimea is what is envisaged by international law, including United Nations principles, namely, the right to exercise self-determination. According to the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States, that right can be realized, including through the establishment of a sovereign and independent State, the free association or integration with an independent State. It is noteworthy that a number of States that have called into question the legitimacy of the secession of Crimea said the opposite with regard to Kosovo.

As to the current conflict in Ukraine, it is unlikely to stop until the Government in Kyiv finds a common ground with all the political forces and regions of the country. We are ready assist in that effort in any way possible. An important step there would be strict compliance with the Minsk agreements, which, as we well know, Kyiv seems to have a problem with. The advantage of the Minsk agreements is their very specific nature, which leaves no room for their manipulation or arbitrary interpretation. That is the big headache for Kyiv, which is attempting to not implement them fully.

In the current context, when accuracy in the understanding of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their inviolability often seems to be lost, we think that there is a need to clearly underscore our shared commitment to those provisions, for which there are no alternatives. We hope that that would help in preventing attempts to bring massive pressure to bear on sovereign States by imposing unilateral decisions and standards in the political, economic and ideological areas. The dictates of the present are that there is a need to establish a true democracy and the rule of law in international relations.

Some delegations today spoke about violations of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, baselessly accusing Russia of such actions. To ensure that such flights of fancy not give the wrong impression, may I just give a quick review of the most egregious cases of disregard for international law, including for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, over the past decades, because clearly they have been forgotten about.

In 1964, the United Kingdom bombed the Yemeni city of Harib. The Security Council condemned that action in resolution 188 (1964), underscoring that reprisals were not compatible with the purposes and principles of the United Nations. In 1983, the United States invaded Grenada. In its resolution 38/7, the General Assembly called the United States actions "a flagrant violation of international law". Many of us are probably aware that the President of the United States at the time reacted to the adoption of the resolution by saying that it would not spoil his appetite for breakfast.

In 1986, the United States carried out an armed attack on Libya, which the General Assembly characterized as a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In 1989, the General Assembly called the United States incursion in Panama an out-and-out violation of international law.

Such violations have been repeatedly noted by the International Court of Justice, the primary judicial organ of the United Nations. For example, in its first historic decision in the 1947 case of *Corfu Channel (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland v. Albania)*, the Court recognized evidence of violations by the United Kingdom of the sovereignty of Albania. In its 1986 judgment in the well-known case of *Military and Paramilitary Activities in and against Nicaragua (Nicaragua v. United States of America)*, the Court directly noted that the United States had violated the sovereignty of Nicaragua and the norms governing non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the non-use of force. It is to be noted that the United States openly continued to carry out actions that the Court had qualified as violations of international law.

The attitude of unaccountability of the United States and its allies continues. I could cite other instances, such as the bombing of Yugoslavia and Iraq and the events of recent years in Libya and Syria, of which I spoke earlier. It would seem that a sense of their own exceptional status has long allowed certain States to place themselves above the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I would also like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable speed so that interpretation may be provided accurately.

I wish to inform all concerned that we will be carrying on this open debate right through the lunch hour, as we have a very large number of speakers.

I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Foradori (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for the invitation to participate in this open debate, which is on an issue of such great importance to the international community, as well as to congratulate the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on its presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing at the beginning of this debate.

The establishment of a special and strategic arrangement at the end of the Second World War conceived and forged the founding principles of world peace. That emblematic and collective decision sought to build a solid base for mutual and lasting trust among nations. The men and women who drafted the Charter of the United Nations possessed an explicit will to integrate and a vision as long as history itself. What is more, they knew that an idea without a goal was only a dream and accordingly drafted a number of guiding principles, the architecture of which was intended to be nearly indestructible.

The maintenance of international peace and security and the desire to take all the necessary measures to ensure both would materialize only if acts of aggression were suppressed and disputes were resolved through peaceful means, based on justice and international law. The battle fatigue that followed the brutal war was the most compelling reason to appeal to the collective will to not repeat the past. Friendship, cooperation and respect were therefore the words that dictated the path set out in San Francisco, when that universal constitution was drafted. Mutual respect was also one of the pillars that supported the fundamental principles with regard to relations among States. The sovereign equality of all Members of the United Nations, refraining from the use or threat of the use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of any State, and non-intervention in internal affairs were the cardinal and guiding principles that motivated that iron-clad collective will.

At that time, one had to be extremely bold to have dreams and translate them into reality, avoiding the arrival of a day in which those hopes might be merely faded memories. However, the firm conviction of those men and women allowed for an end to the macabre ritual characterized by mutual suspicion, giving way to mutual trust. In that process, there was no shortage of sacrifice and effort, paving the way for the tireless search for peace. The levelheadedness of those thinkers, for whom the memories of the ravages of war were still fresh, allowed them to assert, without major debate,

that cultural, social and humanitarian problems should be solved. They also noted the need for economic development and for encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, regardless of race, gender or religion, among other things. Those principles were also considered necessary conditions for ensuring peace and harmony among peoples and nations.

It was in the context of the dynamic balance between non-intervention in internal affairs and the need to respect human rights that one of the premises of the Sustainable Development Goals, among others, was born: the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, access to justice for all and the creation of effective, responsable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights were basic to that process. The promotion of peace and justice was thus established as one of 17 Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). We therefore must make progress by having a comprehensive approach to the consolidation of all of those Goals. It is necessary that States not conceal the absence of respect for human rights within the handy premise of non-intervention in the affairs of other States.

In an increasingly interdependent world, events can no longer be seen apart from their impact on world society. What happens in each of those events affects everyone, and the most delicate responsibility rests on striking a fine balance in terms of what opinions can be considered a violation of a principle or construed as strict respect for another. The United Nations therefore made a decision to support peace processes with special missions, staffed by men and women with experience, to avoid further deepening conflicts. Accordingly, Argentina certainly supports those processes and has decided that when a conflict or a crisis breaks out, it will cooperate actively to mitigate, to the extent possible, the human consequences of those situations through the participation of White Helmets. Cooperation, peace and intervention in those processes therefore come together on the basis of recovering to the maximum extent the deepest sense of humanity.

It is difficult to perceive the fair measure of things, as has always been the case. However, it is preferable to make mistakes in trying to achieve peace and respect for human rights than to show excessive zeal for respecting non-intervention, according to the letter of the law, to such an extent that it becomes indistinguishable from disinterest or indifference to the suffering of others. The calling to promote peace and friendship through constructive criticism is not disrespectful and should aim at building a lasting prosperity among peoples. It is worth mentioning here that, when the Charter of the United Nations highlights the need to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, Argentina understands that exactly as "all", without distinction as to race, gender or religion, inter alia. Our commitment to these purposes is also expressed in our fundamental norm on the basis of which our own society is built. But we also believe that compliance with those purposes is not optional on the part of Members of the United Nations, but mandatory.

In addition, our concept of society assumes that the need to enjoy those fundamental freedoms and to respect for human rights must be complied with by all States, given our belief that for peoples, as for individuals, who are genuinely close and friendly, it is quite easy to cry in solitude and almost impossible to laugh alone. That is why we believe that those who drafted the Charter of the United Nations charted a path for the future that is not contradictory but rather complementary. We consider that vision to be as global as the world in which we live, and it should be seen in that way. It is not an option. It is a dictate, not one based on a standard or a fundamental charter, but rather one based on the collective conscience of our global society.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of El Salvador.

Mr. Castaneda Magaña (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to thank the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for having convened today's open debate. It reflects responsible and wise leadership on the part of that Government in carrying out the work of the Security Council. We take this opportunity to renew the bonds of friendship between our two Governments and to convey special greetings from President Salvador Sánchez Cerén to President Nicolás Maduro Moros and demonstrate our confidence in his country's presidency of the Security Council. We also welcome this opportunity to address the issue of the maintenance of international peace and security and respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element in the maintenance of international peace and security.

My country, as a founding member and supporter of the Charter of the United Nations, firmly believes that comprehensive peace can be achieved only through dialogue, harmony and full respect for international law and human rights. We have made the promotion and strengthening of security at the national and international levels one of our priorities, with respect for human rights as a vital component of our policy. The key tool that the United Nations possesses to uphold its responsibility in that area is represented by its peacekeeping operations. That work has expanded and the mandates have diversified. In addition, the tasks carried out by peacekeeping operations are performed in harsh environments in a constant state of flux. That is why, in order for them to be successful, they require the full support of the international community.

As a country that benefited from that type of operations in the 1990s, we are deeply committed to returning the invaluable support given to us by the international community, and in particular the United Nations, through the United Nations Mission in El Salvador during the peace process in our country. We therefore reiterate our full willingness to continue to actively participate in current and future missions. While we acknowledge that such operations face complex challenges and difficult conditions, we are concerned about ongoing attacks against troops and personnel. We also realize that some field missions do not have adequate security for troops or enough personnel to carry out their work, which decreases their level of security.

El Salvador welcomes the establishment of the new security-risks policy and the steps that have been taken, but we are concerned that it has been developed without any consultation and that its dissemination does not provide a clear strategy for Member States. In that regard, we stress the need for transparent, active, open and regular dialogue among the countries that contribute personnel to peacekeeping operations, the Security Council and the Secretariat, especially with regard to the serious incidents that have occurred recently relating to the safety of peacekeeping personnel and to human rights violations against civilians.

We reiterate the need to provide comprehensive training prior to the deployment of troops and during operations, including appropriate equipment to fulfil the assigned mandates and to maintain dialogue between the Secretariat and potential contributors, so as to develop viable and effective alternatives so that the international community can face such crises in a timely manner. In that regard, our Government supports the initiative of establishing rapid deployment units that would be available to the Security Council.

In conclusion, we would like to make the following points.

First, we believe that it is very important to develop more realistic political strategies that are contextualized and coordinated through valid and effective consultations among the Security Council, the Secretariat, host countries, regional actors and troop-contributing countries, thereby creating an institutional framework within which to reconsider the establishment of and the mandates for such operations and achieve the diligence, clarity and precision needed to ensure the efficacy of peacekeeping operations and the establishment of exit strategies.

Secondly, we believe that the use of modern technologies could help improve the safety and security of personnel and the assets of the United Nations. We reiterate the need for the use of such technologies to be guided by the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, especially the principle of respect for the consent of host States, thereby ensuring respect for the sovereignty of host States.

Thirdly, El Salvador welcomes the initiative of the Secretary-General to establish an independent panel to review allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by international forces in the Central African Republic. We welcome the report to be presented by the panel and look forward to a prompt and specific answer from the Secretary-General to the recommendations made and to the discussion on the subject, in which we will actively take part.

Fourthly, El Salvador supports all initiatives that ensure the participation of women in the various contingents, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000). We hope that that policy will be clearly reflected in the composition of staff, at all levels, under the special mission policy recently approved by the Council with regard to the peace process in Colombia.

Fifthly, El Salvador appreciates the importance of maintaining a balance in the allocation of funds between the maintenance of international peace and security and the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1). We believe that ensuring the financing of the

Agenda's Goals will help us to prevent future conflicts. As a country, we will continue inter-agency efforts to train our police and military personnel. We emphasize that the support that we have been able to provide to peacekeeping operations would not have been possible without the invaluable assistance of friendly countries whose technical cooperation was vital. We hope that we will continue to receive such support.

Finally, we call for working together to strengthen transparency and efficiency in the management of peacekeeping operations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

I wish to convey to you, Sir, and to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela the Movement's appreciation for having convened today's ministerial debate on such a fundamental topic. I also thank the Secretary-General for his input into today's debate. We hope that this debate will contribute to making the United Nations, and in particular the Council, more transparent, democratic and consistent in its undertakings.

At a time when the international community is celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the Organization, there is no better time to engage Member States in the defence of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations as the only way to ensure international peace and security. The purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter are the same pillars upon which the structure of international law is founded. They encompass the fundamental concepts of respect for the sovereignty and equality of States, non-interference, the peaceful settlement of disputes and refraining from the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any Member State. The purposes and principles must be thoroughly respected at all times by all Member States.

NAM has been very strong and consistent in its calls to the international community to uphold and defend the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, as well as the means envisaged in the Charter for the pacific settlement of disputes and non-resort to the threat or use of force. The purposes and principles of the Charter and the principles of international law are essential in preserving and promoting peace and security, the rule of law, economic development and social progress and human rights for all.

Global peace and security continue to elude humankind as a result of, inter alia, the increasing tendency of certain States to resort to unilateralism and unilaterally imposed measures, non-fulfilment of the commitments and obligations assumed under the the relevant international legally binding instruments, especially on weapons of mass destruction and conventional-weapons treaties, terrorism, conflicts, violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, the use of double standards in international relations and the continuing failure and unwillingness of the majority of developed countries to fulfil their commitments in the economic and social fields. We underscore the need for the international community to collectively redress those situations in accordance with the Charter and the principles of international law.

NAM member States, guided by the Movement's principled positions and recognizing the serious danger and threats posed by the actions and measures that undermine international law and international legal instruments, stress the need to undertake a wide range of measures, among others: first, identifying and pursuing measures that may contribute to achieving a peaceful, prosperous, just and equitable world order; secondly, respecting the right of nations to decide on their political, economic and social systems, as a pathway to peaceful coexistence among nations and thereby to peace and security; thirdly, conducting external relations based on the ideals and the purposes and principles of the Movement, the United Nations Charter and international law, as well as the relevant declarations adopted by the General Assembly; fourthly, refraining from recognizing, adopting or implementing extraterritorial or unilateral coercive measures or laws, including unilateral economic sanctions, other intimidating measures and arbitrary travel restrictions that seek to exert pressure on countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, thereby threatening their sovereignty and independence and their freedom of trade and investment and preventing them from exercising their right to decide by their own free will their own political, economic and social systems, where such measures or laws constitute flagrant violations of the United Nations Charter and international law, the

multilateral trading system, as well as the norms and principles governing friendly relations among States; fifthly, opposing and condemning the categorization of countries as good or evil based on unilateral and unjustified criteria, and the adoption of the doctrine of pre-emptive attack, including attack by nuclear weapons by certain States, which is inconsistent with international law, in particular the international legally binding instruments concerning nuclear disarmament; finally, the Movement stresses that the United Nations Charter includes sufficient provisions regarding the use of force to maintain and preserve international peace and security, and that achieving that goal through the Security Council should be done strictly in full conformity with the relevant Charter provisions. Resorting to Chapter VII of the Charter as an umbrella for addressing issues that do not pose a threat to international peace and security must be avoided. In that regard, the Council should fully utilize the relevant Charter provisions, where appropriate, including of Chapters VI and VIII. In addition, consistent with the practice of the United Nations and international law, as pronounced by the International Court of Justice, Article 51 of the Charter is restrictive and should not be rewritten or reinterpreted.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank Minister for Foreign Affairs Delcy Rodríguez Gómez of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for having organized this important debate, as well as to express our appreciation for the Venezuelan proposal to reflect on the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

(*spoke in English*)

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his instructive briefing.

As the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) presented by Venezuela correctly points out, despite considerable obstacles and numerous shortcomings, the United Nations has been able to foster dialogue and cooperation among nations in the past 70 years, while promoting sustainable development and human rights, consolidating the rule of international law and avoiding the outbreak of a new global conflict. The multilateral system founded in San Francisco in 1945 was able to establish its credibility and rise to new challenges, precisely because it was based on universal purposes and principles.

In setting the maintenance of international peace and security as a fundamental purpose, the Charter of the United Nations banned the use of war as an instrument of State policy and affirmed the primacy of prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes. The universal and non-selective applicability of those principles could not be clearer, as Article 2 of the Charter explicitly affirms and reiterates a number of times that "all Members" shall act in accordance with them. The Charter does not distinguish among categories of members in that regard, and establishes without ambiguity that all Members shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed in becoming part of the Organization.

Throughout the years, however, this basic premise has been repeatedly challenged. Violations of the Charter have been frequent. Disregard of the purposes and principles has taken place in all regions of the world. The role of the United Nations as a platform for dialogue and diplomacy has been debilitated by attempts to resolve controversies through unilateral coercive measures, including unauthorized resort to military action. Countering these corrosive trends demands a genuine collective recommitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, a true recommitment to multilateralism, as all Members undertook by adopting General Assembly resolution 70/3 in celebrating the seventieth anniversary of the Organization last year.

In the emerging multipolar world we are experiencing, it is necessary to re-establish an international pact on the inadmissibility of the use of force outside the Charter provisions and without proper authorization by the Security Council. But we should look even further and agree that, whenever authorized, the use of force should be employed responsibly — meaning that action should be judicious, proportionate and strictly limited to the objectives of the mandate and in line with international humanitarian law.

While a renewed commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations seems desirable and warranted, it is also necessary to update our governance structures. Since its foundation, shifts in the international landscape and the emergence of new challenges have required that the United Nations system adapt to new realities. When the United Nations was

created, critical issues we face today, such as the threats posed by terrorism or climate change, were not fully anticipated. Overcoming these truly global challenges requires cooperation and coordinated efforts within a robust multilateral framework.

It is possible to affirm with respect to two of the three main pillars of the United Nations that important and transformative changes have been possible in recent years — with respect to development, through the decisions taken at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1)), and on the human rights front, with the creation of the Human Rights Council and the establishment of a universal periodic review. Many other examples could be provided, including the successful negotiations on climate change undertaken in Paris last December.

In the field of peace and security, despite developments unforeseen in the original Charter framework, such as peacekeeping operations, we are facing a credibility deficit and have yet to overcome deeply ingrained resistance to long-awaited reforms. As a result, this body has gradually lost the capacity to live up to the high moral and political standards rightly expected from the peoples we represent. It must be recognized that, unfortunately, the Security Council has not always fulfilled its obligations as outlined in the purposes and principles of the Charter and in other relevant Charter provisions.

But let us look at the glass being half-full. There are several opportunities before us. Important inputs for reflection and decision have been provided by the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, the High-level Advisory Group on Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, as well as by the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism. Likewise, on the humanitarian front, we will have a chance to make progress in dealing with crucial challenges and responding to the plight of civilians affected by the conflicts we have failed to resolve in the forthcoming Istanbul humanitarian summit and in the General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants in September 2016.

Furthermore, the seventieth session of the General Assembly provides an opportunity that cannot be missed for achieving a concrete outcome on the crucial matter of updating our collective security governance framework. Reforming the Security Council by ensuring that the voices of all members are heard through a process that guarantees equitable representation and improved decision-making is the indispensable mission to strengthen an international order fit for the twenty-first century based on the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations .

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Olguín Cigarroa (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to convey my warm greetings to you, Mr. President, and express my appreciation for the invitation to participate in today's debate, which we consider to be of a high relevance.

The purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, subsequently developed in General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) and supplemented with the consistent practice by States, represent a legal and political heritage that is in full force and which must be protected. In the purposes and principles of the Charter, contained in Articles 1 and 2, respectively, there are three fundamental concepts.

The first of these is universality, since the purposes and principles are universal and maintain the basic structure of the international system. The progressive development of international law has been built on the basis of these purposes and principles. And the particularities and special contexts can in no way relativize the universal scope of the purposes and principles. Therefore, when they are violated, it is necessary that the international community express its concern.

The second concept is the comprehensive-body-of-law nature of the purposes and principles, insofar as they are systematized irrevocable and enforceable rules and customary standards. Jurisprudence and, above all, the unerring practices of States strengthen the political will to be bound by and act on them.

Thirdly, we emphasize the preventive dimension. Several factors can contribute to a dangerous disaffection for the purposes and principles and, to avoid that result, it is essential to act early. From this perspective, the work of the Security Council is

crucial, since remaining indifferent to these signals means putting international peace and security at risk. Similarly, the concerted work of the different organs of the system can be key in preventing destabilization and conflict cycles, as can also be the interaction with regional organizations in the framework of Chapter VIII of the Charter. Moreover, we should remember that the General Assembly has preventive capabilities in accordance with Articles 11 and 12 of the Charter and the action of the Secretary-General and of the different modalities of missions.

During its recent membership of the Council, Chile took up the peace, security and development triad, asserting that it was imperative to understand crises from a broader point of view, including essential concepts such as cohesion, inclusiveness, human rights and respect for differences, in order to address the root causes of conflict. In this context, our country proposed the topic of "Inclusive development for the maintenance of international peace and security" for the open debate at the Council chaired by Chilean President Michelle Bachelet Jeria on 19 January 2015 (see S/PV.7361). The facts reveal that there is a correlation between lack of inclusion and cycles of conflict and destruction of the social fabric, forming an objective threat to international peace and security. We have to act in this field in a direct way to prevent destabilizing processes and thereby safeguard the purposes and principles of the Charter, which should be protected, as they provide the basis for peaceful coexistence and cooperation.

We conclude by reiterating our appreciation to the Venezuelan presidency for convening today's meeting.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Akbaruddin (India): At the outset, I would like to compliment you and your team, Mr. President, for the useful concept note circulated for today's open debate (S/2016/103, annex). We also convey our appreciation for the briefing by the Secretary General.

The Security Council has taken the lead in referring to the purposes and principles of the Charter while attempting to maintain international peace and security. However, its own actions have not always been in the spirit of the Charter. In view of the need for brevity, for illustrative purposes, I would focus on three areas symptomatic of where the spirit that imbues the purposes and principles that underpin the Charter is no longer evident in the Council's day-to-day functioning

First, we are all fond of emphasizing that the United Nations Charter was adopted in the name of "we the peoples". Yet rarely a week goes by without an incident being reported from some part of the world in which we the peoples — in whose name the Charter was adopted — are the targets of terrorist attacks. While terrorism remains a cardinal threat to the maintenance of international peace and security, the efforts of the United Nations and the Security Council in taking decisive action to combat terrorism leaves much to be desired.

By way of example, I would refer to the requirement of consensus for listing an individual terrorist or a terrorist organization in a Security Council sanctions regime. This extension of the veto to all members of the sanctions committees has in practice resulted in the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities many a time being held hostage to the whims and fancies of one Member State or other. There is no explanation required, and a simple statement of objection or a hold or a block kills the listing request assiduously built against those who have undertaken heinous activities. Who bears the responsibility for such decisions, or, rather, indecision when well-known terror groups and individuals whose listings have been blocked or put on hold behind the anonymous consensus decision-making process resort to carnage at a subsequent date?

Furthermore, we have noticed that even brazen public violations of the sanctions regime by listed individuals and entities, far from attracting punitive measures, do not elicit even the mildest censure. Yet we, the general membership of the United Nations, are expected to comply with the decisions of the Council's sanctions committees, or lack thereof.

My second point relates to peacekeeping, which is the signature activity of the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security. In this context, we would like to raise the issue of the lack of consultation between the Security Council and the troop-contributing countries, despite Article 44 of the Charter, which explicitly requires the Council to invite Member States contributing troops that are not members of the Council to participate in the decisions of the Council. This has seriously compromised the objectives of peacekeeping. We the troop-contributing

countries have our troops on the ground and have important inputs to provide the Security Council, which is tasked with formulating the mandates of the peacekeeping operations. This lack of consultations comes at the cost of the efficiency of peacekeeping operations. While we stand ready to fulfil the mandate finalized by the Council, it is logical that we expect the Council to consult the troop-contributing countries.

Thirdly, and finally, the Council needs to be reminded that charity begins at home. It is ironical that the Security Council is working towards the establishment of democracy and the rule of law in various parts of the world when its own house is not in order. The current structure and methods of work of the Security Council are divorced from reality and represent a bygone era. To regain its legitimacy, there is no option but for the Council to reform. We hope that it will not require a cataclysmic crisis to foster this fundamental change. There has never been a greater need for reform of the Council, which is a sine qua non for its optimal efficiency and would be a real form of tribute to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mrs. Nguyen (Viet Nam): Viet Nam aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegation commends the initiative by the Venezuelan presidency to hold this open debate on the crucial topic of respect for the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter. This is highly relevant given the growing challenges to global security and the crucial role of the United Nations in tackling these challenges.

Since its founding seven decades ago, the United Nations has successfully proved its relevance and value as the most inclusive multilateral body in safeguarding the global collective security architecture. The Organization has helped avert wars, promote decolonization, protect human rights and advance economic and social development.

These successes are all founded upon the United Nations Charter, with the purposes and principles at its core. As a matter of fact, these fundamental principles — respect for the independence, sovereign equality and territorial integrity of Member States; non-interference in their internal affairs; commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes; and refraining from the threat or use of force — have become the linchpin of the Organization, the core values of the international community, the protection upon which the weak can rely, and safeguards against the abuse of power.

We have to acknowledge, however, that significant threats to international peace and security continue to exist, be they the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, terrorism and violent extremism, prolonged sovereignty and territorial disputes, or escalating intra-State and regional conflicts. Millions of people around the world are living in destitution, fleeing wars and conflicts or suffering from various forms of deprivation.

The severity and complexity of the present challenges require a determined approach on the part of the United Nations, particularly its main organs, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter. Special attention must be paid to respect for the unique nature of each nation in terms of history, culture, politics and economics.

The peaceful settlement of disputes and the prevention of conflicts must remain key aspects in the work of the Organization in order to strengthen regional and international peace and security. The United Nations must further promote and assist Member States in utilizing the applicable means specified in Article 33 of the Charter in the settlement of disputes.

We also believe that the Security Council, as the body with primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security, should prioritize the peaceful means stipulated in Article 33 and deepen its relationship with regional and subregional organizations, which play a significant role in settling these disputes, fostering conflict prevention and mediation partnerships, in addition to providing rapid responses to regional crises. It is also essential to mobilize resources and develop capabilities for United Nations peacekeeping operations so as to ensure its readiness, efficiency and effectiveness.

Viet Nam, as a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), has worked tirelessly with our fellow ASEAN members in building

a regional architecture conducive to stability and prosperity, as well as addressing regional security challenges through political and security advancements in the ASEAN community. We are also working with partners to develop tools for conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the purpose and principles of the United Nations Charter.

These efforts by ASEAN and its partners are vital, as the region is faced with increasingly complex developments in the East Sea, also known as the South China Sea, especially the ongoing illegal large-scale land-reclamation and construction activities that have changed the status of some of its features. These unilateral activities damage the environment and have serious implications for peace, stability and security in the region, raising concerns among ASEAN countries and others within and outside the region. It is therefore vital to put an immediate end to all actions that change the status quo or militarize or further complicate the situation in the East Sea. We call upon all concerned parties to settle disputes through peaceful means in conformity with the United Nations Charter and the fundamental principles of international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, respect freedom of navigation and aviation in the region, and remain committed to the full and strict implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea and the early conclusion of a code of conduct.

History has proved the significance of the United Nations Charter as a key element in the maintenance of international peace and stability. We remain committed and stand ready to work closely with the United Nations and other partners in our joint efforts to collectively address the international peace and security challenges we face now and will face in the coming years.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden.

Mr. Thöresson (Sweden): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden.

I would like to start by thanking the Venezuelan presidency for having organized a debate on a topic that remains as relevant today as it was when the Charter was adopted, more than 70 years ago.

Not since the Second World War have we faced such great challenges as we do today, with unprecedented numbers of people fleeing violent conflict, massive human rights violations and emergencies. Violent extremism is threatening the social fabric of States and societies, and climate change is the greatest threat to many States. No State can tackle these challenges alone. It is our shared responsibility, and it requires global, regional and local solutions.

More than 70 years after its adoption, the Charter of the United Nations stands as an enduring sign of multilateral cooperation based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. We continue to firmly believe in and support the United Nations in leading our global collaborative efforts. We believe that the purposes and principles of the Organization, as embodied in the Charter, are as important as ever before. They constitute the bedrock of the rules-based world order on which our collective peace and prosperity rest.

In the area of peace and security, we need to do far more and far better to live up to the standards set by the Charter. The Charter calls on States to, first and foremost, strive to achieve peaceful settlements of disputes through negotiation, mediation, and judicial means. History has shown clearly that this is not only the right thing to do, but the most efficient way to prevent conflicts. That insight echoes last year's important reviews relating to United Nations peace and security efforts. They put the primacy of politics and the importance of conflict prevention front and centre. We must seize this opportunity to implement the proposed reforms.

Lasting peace is not achieved through military engagement, but through political solutions and responsible governance based on the rule of law. Early warning and the prevention of armed conflict are among our greatest responsibilities and need much more investment from all of us at all levels. To lay the foundations of a sustainable peace, we must deliver on the promise to create a culture of prevention. This includes ensuring respect for human rights, which is essential to prevent conflict. For the Council, that means taking a broad view of peace, security and development, and putting the Charter above national interests.

As forcefully stated by the Secretary-General in his report for the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit, we must uphold the norms that safeguard humankind. The Secretary-General reminds us that the

inherent dignity and worth of the human person are the bedrock of the Charter of the United Nations. Attacks against civilians, massive and indiscriminate bombing and shelling of populated areas, and the blocking of humanitarian assistance are all demonstrations of flagrant disrespect of international humanitarian law. The perpetrators of the grave crimes we see committed every day must be held accountable for their actions in order to bring justice to the victims and to deter future crimes.

The founders of the United Nations showed remarkable foresight in stressing the role of regional organizations in the prevention and resolution of conflict. Indeed, the Charter encourages the peaceful settlement of disputes by regional arrangements before referring them to the Security Council. These vital and mutually reinforcing partnerships now need to be made even stronger and more strategic. The United Nations needs to not only work alongside regional organizations in different theatres, but also enable them to share the burden in accordance with the Charter.

Providing support and resources to the African Union and to African subregional organizations for operations authorized by the Security Council is of particular importance in that regard. The Nordic countries' support to African solutions to African problems is not only a political commitment, but a practical one, demonstrated by the many strands of cooperation that exists among us in the field of peace and security. Let me stress that this is a two-way street. African States are often the first to deploy their peacekeepers to theatres where peace is elusive. This needs to be acknowledged, and lessons need to be learned from the African experience.

Many speakers today have referred to the opening words of the Charter: "We the peoples of the United Nations". Our pursuit of peace and development is for the benefit not only of States and communities, but, most fundamentally, for individual men, women and children. A world based on the rule of law and respect for human rights; a world where every individual has a right to economic, social and cultural development, and where social progress and better standards of living are for everyone is a world that is safer for everyone. Allow me to end with the words of Dag Hammarskjöld:

> "The principles of the Charter of the United Nations are, by far, greater than the Organization in which they are embodied, and the aims which they are to safeguard are holier than the policies of any single nation or people."

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to welcome Ms. Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the friendly nation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, to this important meeting. We also wish to congratulate Venezuela on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. We shall spare no effort in our support for Venezuela and its honourable approach to the maintenance of international peace and security. I would like to stress the following points.

First, only one parameter should be adopted in upholding the rule of law at the international level, maintaining international peace and security, achieving development and promoting cordial relationships between Member States. That parameter is strict respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, at the forefront of which are respect for the sovereignty territorial integrity of States, equal sovereignty, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. Any attempt to impose new concepts and terms without consensus, and at the expense of the provisions of the Charter that were adopted by Member States, would undermine the cumulative legal heritage of Member States and represent a setback.

Today, we have heard extremely worrying statements made on behalf of permanent members of the Security Council, which are supposed to be the guardians of the purposes and principles of the Charter. Those statements, calling for interventionist policies, are a violation of the principle of sovereignty under various pretexts that leave the door wide open to the recurrent illegitimate military interventions against many Member States, which increased instability and weakened of the United Nations.

The representatives of these permanent members, Britain and France, have forgotten the suffering that the policies of their Governments have perpetuated in recent decades, mainly in the Middle East. They have forgotten the support they provided to the Israeli occupation of the occupied Arab territories, and their frequent use of the veto in support of that ongoing occupation, in addition to the targeting, destruction and

occupation of Iraq and Libya, and attempts to undermine the legitimate Government of my country, not unlike what those countries have done in Latin America and around the world. Such a political ideology undermines the credibility of international law and will lead to a repetition of grave mistakes instead of apologies for previous bloody errors.

Secondly, the seven decades since the establishment of the United Nations have highlighted the need for strict adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter and to reform some working methods and strengthen others in a manner that would allow the United Nations to fully play its role, and to preserve its credibility and legitimacy. Throughout its history, the United Nations has grappled with the attempts of influential countries to turn it into a tool for serving their interests and policies in total disregard of the principles of international law and the purposes of the Charter. That has been crystal clear since the Organization's early years. It has shown itself to be helpless in the face of such attempts and incapable of taking adequate measures to implement many internationally legitimate resolutions in accordance with the Charter, particularly those calling for an end to the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the remaining occupied lands of southern Lebanon, and to Israel's aggression against the Arab citizens under the yoke of occupation.

That has also been made clear through attempts to manipulate the provisions of the Charter, use double standards and invent new concepts and terms, aimed at circumventing the Charter and the principles of international law, that are not agreed on by consensus and have been used to justify bloody military interventions in countries that have resulted in the fomenting of terrorism. Libya, for example, has become a hot spot and a breeding ground for terrorism today.

Thirdly, the United Nations, having defeated Nazism and fascism, has now once again been called on to repeat that victory against the onslaught of terrorist organizations such as Da'esh, the Al-Nusra Front and other entities that are active in Syria and linked to Al-Qaida, including Jaish Al-Islam, Ahrar Al-Sham, Boko Haram, the East Turkestan Islamic Movement, Ansar Al-Sharia, Al-Shabaab, Jamaat Al-Islamiyya and the Caucasus Emirate, as well as many others. In that regard, my delegation would like to reiterate that no efforts to combat terrorism can succeed if they run counter to the provisions of the Charter and the principles of international law, if they are carried out without prior coordination with the country concerned and while some countries use terrorism as a foreign policy tool and the State-sponsored terrorism is ignored.

In that context, we should reaffirm that the attempts by some Member States to justify their military intervention in Syria, on the pretext of combating Da'esh and complying with Article 51 of the Charter, distort those provisions of the Charter and constitute a surreal manipulation of international law that undermines Syrian sovereignty, thus prolonging the life of terrorism and sheltering its sponsors. The only effective way to combat terrorism is to establish a legitimate, proactive international coalition with the participation of the countries concerned, including the Syrian Government and State.

The situation in Syria throws the unfortunate state of the United Nations into relief. Since the earliest days of the crisis, members of the Organization have exploited the Security Council in order to interfere blatantly in Syria's internal affairs. That has further inflamed the violence and terrorism, has promoted false claims and lies, demonized the Syrian Government and aggravated the crisis, in addition to hindering efforts to arrive at a peaceful settlement. All of these are part of efforts to undermine Syria's stability, security and national sovereignty and attempting to change its regime by force. The Governments of the States concerned fabricated and invented artificial entities that they promoted as an alternative to Syria's legitimate Government, and all of this was carried out in the context of lies aimed at justifying the invasion of Syria, a State Member of the United Nations, in order to change its regime through the use of force.

This was in addition to imposing unilateral coercive measures depriving the Syrian people of daily needs such as food, medicine and fuel, along with further inflaming the situation in order to create false humanitarian pretexts justifying military intervention — a situation that also recalls the experience of Libya with a situation that its entire people, indeed the whole world, is still suffering from. All of this has occurred without any apology, awakening of conscience or change in these countries' disastrous and shameful policies, which have only resulted in more bloodshed and suffering.

Matters have not stopped there. The Governments of States Members of the Organization have gathered mercenaries, takfiris and foreign terrorist fighters from

all over the world. They have armed and funded these terrorist criminals and sent them to Syria and Iraq, wrongly terming them jihadis or moderate opposition. They have been sent to Syria in order to use our country as a base for their terrorist entities and in order to launch attacks from Syria on other countries around the world. Some have thought it wise to use the term "Islamic caliphate" as a title for Da'esh terrorists, in order to insinuate that Da'esh terrorism is a State effort. In that regard, I have to wonder about the commitment those countries made, when they joined the United Nations, to peaceful coexistence as good neighbours with other nations. Where is their respect for the principles of international law concerning friendly relations, as laid down in General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) of 1970? How can we interpret the silence in the United Nations surrounding these Governments' systematic violations of resolutions on counter-terrorism such as resolution 2253 (2015), 2199 (2015), 2178 (2014), 2170 (2014), 1373 (2001) and 1269 (1999)?

Over the past few days, the Turkish Government has continued its acts of aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic. Turkey's armed forces intervened directly in support of the terrorism the country sponsors. The regime has repeatedly used mercenaries and foreign terrorist fighters that it has introduced, in partnership with other countries, into my country. The forces of the Erdoğan regime have used heavy artillery to bomb areas occupied by Syrian Kurds and Syrian Arab army sites inside Syrian territory. On top of that, dozens of vehicles carrying machine guns and armed terrorist mercenaries have been sent to the area of Syria around A'zaz, besides Turkey allowing extreme terrorist groups to transit through Turkey to Syria in support of the Al-Nusra Front or Da'esh inside Syria. In addition to that, the Turkish regime has given those terrorist gangs chemical weapons that they can use against Syrian civilians and Government forces — chemical attacks that have been used as a pretext for indicting the Syrian Government. Those efforts have been conducted in tandem with calls from the Saudi regime for a military intervention in my country, under the pretext of combating the terrorism carried out by Da'esh, an organization founded and sponsored by the Saudi regime itself.

Despite everything I have just mentioned, the Council has remained helpless, silent and unable to put an end to the attacks and aggression, and unable to carry out its main role, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. We are discussing tragic facts, and therefore feel great sorrow for the hundreds of Syrians killed each day while the United Nations remains helpless and unable to hold the perpetrators of international terrorism accountable.

The situation has reached unprecedented levels. Indeed, carelessness has reached unprecedented levels when Saudi Arabia is entrusted with the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre, Qatar is the sponsor of the Dialogue among Civilizations, Turkey will host the World Humanitarian Summit and Jordan, before the end of its mandated term as a Council member, was a member of the "peace troika" with Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

The Council President indicated in the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) that the United Nations remains the best possible option in confronting the conflicts and mammoth challenges that are facing humankind. We agree with that. However, the United Nations must fill in the gaps — the enormous gaps — and undertake its responsibilities towards its Member States, according to the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and in fulfilment of the aims of the founding fathers.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary.

Ms. Bogyay (Hungary): The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, our commitments to humanity, are being tested repeatedly today. It is our shared responsibility to work nationally, regionally and internationally to uphold them. I wish to thank Venezuela for providing us with this opportunity to reflect on this very important issue.

Hungary aligns itself with the statement to be delivered shortly on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to share with the Council some of my country's priorities.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of conflict prevention. The various ongoing review processes also reaffirm that very important issue. Instead of being stuck in a perpetual crisis-management mode, we should further prioritize early warning, prevention and conflict resolution. The Security Council, with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has a special responsibility in that regard. We think it should use all of the elements in its toolbox, including means related to the peaceful settlement of

disputes, cooperation with regional organizations, the adoption of smart targeted sanctions and the referral of situations to the International Criminal Court (ICC), if circumstances so warrant.

We believe that preserving peace requires synergy among the three pillars of the United Nations. We cannot achieve peace and security without ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, human dignity and the equal rights of men and women. The promotion of sustainable development is equally important. We believe that it is the only way to ensure long-lasting and more robust solutions, and therefore the only way we can sustain peace and avoid relapses into conflict.

The Charter of the United Nations embodies a vision for a more peaceful, stable and prosperous world for all. We must protect that for which it stands. We must protect human dignity. Stopping the violent acts committed by terrorists, putting an end to widespread and gross human rights violations and eradicating various forms of modern slavery all require our joint and coordinated efforts.

In past years, the Security Council has frequently referred to the principle of the responsibility to protect. Hungary believes that, on the tenth anniversary of that principle, it is high time for the international community to renew and enhance its enduring commitment to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Hungary believes that ensuring accountability for atrocity crimes is one of the best ways to prevent their recurrence. States have the primary obligation to repress violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, and we welcome all initiatives aimed at enhancing domestic prosecution. At the same time, we also acknowledge the crucial role played by the ICC in the battle to end impunity when national criminal accountability mechanisms are unavailable.

Finally, as a member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, Hungary actively participated in the elaboration of the code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. So far, 110 Member States have signed the code of conduct. I encourage those that have not yet done so to join that important initiative, which represents a unique opportunity to improve the Council's ability to prevent and respond to atrocities in a timely and decisive manner.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the African Union.

Mr. António (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the President of the African Union Commission, Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, who could not join us owing to her schedule, allow me to express our warm congratulations to the friendly country of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of February. I also wish to welcome the presence here this morning of Ms. Delcy Eloína Rodríguez Gómez, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Her noteworthy presence among us demonstrates both the unwavering attachment on the part of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its inspirational determination to provide a significant contribution to the Council's work. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his valuable briefing this morning.

It has been 70 years since the creation of the United Nations, yet the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations can still stand the test of time and the world's crises, allowing the Organization to preserve the foundation guiding its work to achieve the triptych of peace, human rights and development. Guided by those fundamental values, the United Nations has added several accomplishments and many successes to its credit. Peace and security have been restored in many parts of the world, people have freed themselves from the yoke of colonialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the world has experienced significant development in recent decades.

Those principles, which are of well-established legitimacy, must continue to guide United Nations efforts to address both traditional and new threats to international peace and security. Those fundamental values require a new dynamism in order to silence the weapons in the many areas of conflict around the world, end colonization and foreign occupation and eliminate poverty and famine, which, along with new terrorist threats, violent extremism and organized crime, make up the greatest challenges facing the United Nations. We must also work to reaffirm the principle of complementarity, as stipulated in Chapter VIII of the Charter. The provisions in that Chapter highlight the importance of judiciously combining the universal

character of the United Nations with the advantages that regional approaches offer.

In the tradition of its strategic partnership with the United Nations, the African Union has espoused the purposes and principles outlined in the Charter of the United Nations. Article 3 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union enshrines those objectives and underlines the need to promote the conditions that favour international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The contribution of the African Union to achieving the aim of the Charter set out in paragraph 1, Article 1, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security, is now incontestable. Africa contributes more than 45 per cent of the peacekeeping personnel around the world. Since 2003, it has mandated the deployment of more than 70,000 uniformed personnel and nearly 1,500 civilians in nine operations. The stabilization efforts undertaken by those missions and the sacrifices made by their personnel have greatly facilitated the task of the United Nations missions that have subsequently taken up the reins.

In parallel to the deployment of peacekeeping operations on the ground, the African Union has also worked to build long-term capacity through the African Standby Force. That Force makes possible an appropriate response aimed at remedying some of the shortcomings seen in recent operations led by the African Union, which relate to planning, force-generation, command, monitoring and support for missions. However, one of the major obstacles that the African Union regularly faces in that context concerns the lack of flexible, sustained and predictable financing. It is essential that the peacekeeping operation review process find an appropriate solution to that issue, bearing in mind that peacekeeping efforts made at the regional level also represent a contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security, in accordance with Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. The African Union, in a decision of its Assembly of the Heads of State and Government, has committed to ensuring that 25 per cent of its budget is designated for peacekeeping operations.

This year also marks the tenth anniversary of the annual consultations between the Security Council and the African Union Council of Peace and Security. It also marks the end of the 10-year Capacity-building Programme of the African Union. That offers us a unique opportunity to take stock of the partnership between our two organizations, to draw the appropriate lessons from past experience, to recognize both our successes and our failures and to identify the ways and means of strengthening our cooperation with a view to responding better to challenges. That strategic partnership represents an asset for both the United Nations and the African Union. It should be reinforced so as to enable both organizations to achieve greater consistency in their policies, based on prior consultation before taking any decisions and on a common understanding of the issues and a common definition of shared priorities. In that regard, concrete steps must be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of the joint annual consultations, both between the Security Council and African Union Council of Peace and Security, and between the Secretariat and the African Union Commission.

Furthermore, we look forward to the General Assembly's efforts to enshrine and give concrete form to the new United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agendas, which are designed to succeed the 10-year African Union Capacity-building Programme. The new programme represents a new vision. It includes specific recommendations on the nature of the support expected from the United Nations system in various areas of activity.

Today's debate also represents an opportunity to recall the need to continue the reform of the United Nations, to adapt its mechanisms and to modernize its instruments so as to enable it to fulfil its mission with greater effectiveness. The completion of the process of revitalizing the General Assembly, as well as the long-awaited reform of the Security Council, should end the historical injustice inflicted on Africa. Those processes remain essential to making the Organization more effective and more representative of the current global balance.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Deputy Head of the Observer Delegation of the European Union.

Mr. Vrailas: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member State. The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process

and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We thank the Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council for providing the Council and the United Nations as a whole with this opportunity to reflect on and reaffirm our commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their continued relevance in the twenty-first century. More than ever, the Charter needs to be respected and implemented. This debate also gives us an opportunity to pay tribute to those who have sacrificed themselves in the hope of a free, democratic and peaceful world, established on the basis of the universal values that not only underlie the United Nations but also inspired the foundation of the European Union.

As we mark this year, the fiftieth anniversary of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and look ahead to the seventieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2018, it is appropriate to recall that the Charter of the United Nations has provided the bedrock on which an extensive network of international human rights obligations and commitments have been built.

In its work, the Security Council has increasingly embraced the advancement of human rights as a critical element of promoting peace and security and preventing conflicts and atrocities. Ranging from its consideration of country situations to taking forward the women and peace and security agenda, such efforts should continue and intensify. The Council also has the important power to refer situations in which genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes appear to have been committed to the International Criminal Court, as well as to decide on targeted sanctions.

The Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front initiative also draws on the foundational human rights principles enshrined in the Charter, in the context of its aspirations to gear the entire United Nations system towards the advancement of human rights and to seek to ensure that mass atrocities become a thing of the past.

In paragraph 4, Article 2, the Charter calls on all Members of the Organization to

> "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State".

It provides that all Member States shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means and fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them. The European Union and its member States are deeply committed to those core principles of the United Nations. We firmly believe that there is no place in the twenty-first century for the use of force and coercion to change internationally recognized borders in Europe or elsewhere.

In that regard, the European Union recalls General Assembly resolution 68/262 and remains strongly committed to upholding the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine. Similarly, we are heartened by the positive momentum and the atmosphere surrounding the intensified unification talks in Cyprus under United Nations auspices. We look forward to bringing that process to a successful conclusion and to reaching a comprehensive settlement as soon as possible, on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions and in line with European Union principles.

Nowhere are the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations being tested more severely today than in Syria. That conflict continues to rage, with disastrous consequences for the Syrian population, for the neighbouring countries and for the wider region, including for us in the European Union. We strongly condemn the use of starvation as a method of warfare, which most of all affects the weakest and most vulnerable, in particular women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. As Secretary General Ban Ki-moon recently pointed out, the use of starvation as a weapon of war is a war crime. In that regard, it is crucial to reaffirm our firm commitment to fight impunity.

The indiscriminate bombing of civilian areas is unacceptable. It has led to mass displacements and huge refugee flows. It has also encouraged recruitment by, and the flourishing of, terrorist groups in Syria. The European Union calls on all parties to cease all attacks on civilian objects and take all the appropriate steps to protect civilians, including members of ethnic, religious and confessional communities, and to grant immediate access to humanitarian relief operations. They must fully respect international humanitarian law and implement the relevant Security Council resolutions. We also recall that the primary responsibility to protect its population lies with the Syrian regime. When that

responsibility is not fulfilled, the Security Council is responsible for taking decisive action.

It is indeed urgent to halt the conflict in Syria and put an end to the suffering of the population. The European Union fully supports the United Nations Special Envoy for Syria, Mr. Staffan de Mistura, and his efforts in Geneva to make progress in the Syrian political process on the basis of resolution 2254 (2015).

Allow me, in that context, to also welcome the outcome of the recent international donors conference in London convened by the United Kingdom, Germany, Norway, Kuwait and the United Nations on 4 February, which managed to raise more than $10 billion. The EU has mobilized almost €5 billion so far. We already committed substantial support to Turkey, and are putting together comprehensive support packages for Jordan and Lebanon.

Against the background of continued suffering in Syria and the significant challenges that still remain elsewhere, including in Libya, where the EU strongly encourages all parties to fully implement the political agreement, it is important to highlight that important progress has been made in the region. Last July, after years of difficult and complex negotiations coordinated by the European Union, an agreement was reached on the Iranian nuclear issue. The adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action in October, endorsed in resolution 2231 (2015), marked another important milestone to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. The proclamation of implementation day on 16 January marks a further milestone in that process and demonstrates that diplomacy and multilateralism deliver effective results for peace and security. It shows that cooperation can prevail over confrontation.

The fight against all forms of radicalization, violent extremism and terrorism continues to be of paramount importance to the European Union. The horrific attacks in Istanbul, Paris, Beirut and Garissa serve as a stark and most egregious reminder of the unacceptable costs of a collective failure to act swiftly and effectively. We welcome the Secretary-General's plan of action for preventing violent extremism, which was released in January. We look forward to its discussion and implementation, and trust that further preventive action will be taken by the Secretary-General and all bodies of the Organization, including by the Council, as well as Member States. We also look forward to engage in the upcoming tenth anniversary review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in June 2016. It remains imperative that the United Nations ensures coherence and coordination of its actions in supporting Member States to fight this scourge. The European Union will continue to step up its efforts at home and with the external partners in this area, in line with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, as well as in accordance with international law, particularly human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law.

The President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the League of Arab States.

Mr. Fathalla (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to welcome the Foreign Minister of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and to congratulate her on Venezuela's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. I would also like to commend the President for the holding of this important debate on the issue of respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Unfortunately, its convening coincides with an absence of peace and stability in the Middle East due to the conflicts that have erupted, which have led to further destruction, terrorism, killing and suffering.

The creation of the United Nations was an attempt to introduce the idea of world governance by establishing a global forum with the authority to take important decisions that guarantee respect for all peoples and nations and the principles of stability, security and peace, as stipulated in the Charter. The Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom at the time stated on 22 November 1945 that he was

> "prepared to sit with anyone, party or State, to establish a Constitution, such as the Constitutions of great countries, with the aim of establishing a world council that serves peace and ends war".

The Security Council and this Organization are the sole forum to put an end to war and destructive conflicts and are entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security. Achieving peace based on constructive dialogue and peaceful negotiations and the principle of respect for the sovereignty of States and non-interference in their internal affairs have always been the main purpose for which the Organization was established. It was founded shortly after the of the League of Arab States with both organizations united

in their ultimate goal, namely, peace. Peace can be achieved only through dialogue, cooperation, equality and stability, without conflicts and disagreement. We need that peace more than ever in the Middle East, it being the region where conflicts have festered and led to untold suffering, death and destruction.

For 70 years since the United Nations was established and its Charter was adopted, thie Organization has needed to undertake further work to strengthen the purposes and principles of the Charter. That requires political will. Membership in this world Organization makes it incumbent upon its members to be committed to its Charter and its purposes and principles. Its main body in charge of the maintenance of international peace and security, namely the Security Council, should take the lead, particularly the Permanent Members of the Council, and should set their selfish interests aside and work together with a view to achieving the common purpose.

In that regard, I hope what the Washington Post has published today will not become reality. If further fighting happens near Aleppo, it carries the danger of becoming a world war. We believe that the international system that we have all agreed to after the Second World War should prevent such possibilities — 70 years since international efforts have not been able to achieve the desired peace in the Middle East.

Instead of settling problems that have lasted for decades, those problems have been exacerbated. To date, the Security Council has been unable to find solutions to those problems and conflicts. That, in and of itself, increases the dangers to international peace and security, particularly with the emergence of so-called non-State actors. The United Nations has been attempting to find a successful method for dealing with failed States, but we are afraid that the further development of non-State actors may result in the existence of more such States and increase the risk of the political and legal failure of the international community.

The Security Council is the only guarantor of international peace and security in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as it is the only international organ capable of implementing its resolutions and addressing challenges and dangers to international peace and security. The time has come to reconsider the Council's policies with regard to dealing with world conflicts and helping peoples in conflict areas to overcome their differences and face the challenges that threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. Undoubtedly, any review of those policies would require a review of the working methods of the Security Council, including the right of veto.

The implementation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the maintenance of international peace and security require solidarity on the part of all international bodies that work in combating terrorist organizations, with a view to confronting their extreme ideologies, containing them and stopping them, instead of watching them spread to North Africa and potentially to Europe. It has become necessary to implement Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular paragraph 1, Article 53:

> "The Security Council shall, where appropriate, utilize such regional arrangements or agencies for enforcement action under its authority".

If the Security Council has been successful in that regard in cooperation with the African Union, we believe that it should also begin to consider doing the same with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the League of Arab States, particularly with regard to establishing joint forces with the League of Arab States. As a regional Arab organization, the League of Arab States reiterates its respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and commits to continuing its efforts with a view to maintaining international peace and security and promoting the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States members of the League by protecting them from extreme terrorist organizations. In accordance with article 6 of the organizational document of the Arab Peace and Security Council, we intend to establish an Arab peacekeeping force and continue our efforts on the ground aimed at the implementation of Arab League Summit decision 628 of 2015.

In conclusion, the League of Arab States joins the United Nations and other important regional organizations in working for the maintenance of international peace and security and expresses the hope that the Security Council, the primary organ charged with maintaining international peace and security, will be able to put an end to conflicts, instead of just

managing them, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and with a view to realizing the aspirations of peoples and preserving the credibility of the Council.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nicaragua.

Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express at the outset our affectionate and grateful memories of the eternal Commander Hugo Chávez Frías, Commander of the Bolivarian Revolution, a champion of love, friendship and solidarity, and to convey, on behalf of our President, the Nicaraguan people and our delegation, our warm greetings to President Nicolás Maduro Moros and our congratulations on the very valuable and successful leadership of the presidency of the Council for this month. I extend our greetings to our brother Rafael Ramírez Carreño, the Permanent Representative, and to his delegation for their dedication and commitment during this presidency.

Nicaragua aligns itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Charter of our Organization, which has just celebrated its seventieth anniversary, was drafted at a time when there was a convergence of efforts to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" . Our Organization presented itself to the world as an entity that was a facilitator of peace, but, since its founding to the present day, the stated objectives have been frustrated. In that regard, allow me share the thoughts of our President, Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra:

> "We believe that only when the United Nations is equitable and democratic, recast, re-created and fit for the purpose of serving the world and humankind in the twenty-first century, can we tackle the great challenges of our time...
>
> "Nicaragua calls for a world of solidarity and complementarity and a reshaped United Nations in which everyone's interests are served and all Member States can listen and talk to each other on equal footing. We also call for the United Nations agencies to play a respectful, responsible and ethical role, devoid of any form of interference and intervention in the internal affairs of sovereign States." (*A/70/PV.23, p. 12*).

The decisions that the most important organs of our Organization make must be based on the full and unconditional respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter, which, therefore, makes the present debate more urgent and meaningful. Unfortunately, in recent years, we have seen decisions taken by the Security Council that have not been predicated on those principles. The increasing greed engendered by global capitalism, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, have sparked wars and sown insecurity, destruction, death and the forced and brutal displacement of millions of refugees, exposing the true nature of war, terrorism and the conflicts that we are living. Those are all actions that are unfortunately promoted and supported by some permanent members of the Security Council.

On the one hand, the Council has found itself hindered in its efforts to act in the common interest on several occasions. The most obvious example, in that regard, is the case of Palestine. On the other hand, the Council has been misused and manipulated through the granting of mandates with regard to situations in the Middle East aimed at promoting regime changes, wars and the provision of financing to terrorist groups, in flagrant violation of the principles of international law, relations of friendship and cooperation among States, and the Charter of the United Nations. Our country reaffirms its condemnation of those actions and like attempts to undermine peace in our America, the only region that has been declared a zone of peace. We condemn the coup attempts against our sister Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the plans to assassinate its President, Comrade Nicolás Maduro Moros. We also condemn the maintenance of the inhuman and criminal blockade against our sister Republic of Cuba.

Nicaragua, as one of the first four States to ratify the Charter, firmly believes that the maintenance of international peace and security calls, first of all, for a sense of community based on the sovereign equality of its members, the self-determination of peoples and compliance with international law, where individual and individualistic interests and the culture of war are completely eliminated and replaced by a culture of engagement, dialogue, consensus, peace and solidarity. That does not entail only the establishment of new codes of conduct for members of the Council, as some have suggested, but rather strict respect for the rules that already exist and the principles that guide the Council and that are set out in the Charter, which is above any other instrument, as established in Article 103.

Promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes is a central point in this order of things, and we must work to eliminate the use or threat of use of force to resolve disputes. The Charter provides several options in that regard, one of which is the International Court of Justice, which deserves special mention, as it is the principal legal body whose judgments are binding and are to be complied with immediately. In that regard, recognition of the jurisdiction of the Court and the withdrawal of reservations to it is an imperative now more than ever.

Actions to counter terrorism must be made collectively within the framework of the Charter and international law, while ensuring that all Member States are equal participants in terms of their rights and respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

With regard to peacekeeping missions, Nicaragua believes that respect for the empowerment of the host country is vital to ensuring the legitimacy of the operations themselves and their success. In that regard, we reaffirm the need to strengthen the authority of the General Assembly to address issues relating to the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in situations in which the Council fails to exercise its primary responsibility in adhering to the Charter. We call on the international community to fulfil the objectives that we outlined 70 years ago to work together in solidarity and with respect and to eradicate the scourges that continue to be obstacles to the maintenance of international peace and security.

I conclude with inspiring words from our President, Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, who said that the Organization must respond to the challenges of our time with measures and actions that reflect the best interests of the peoples, such as respect for others, the inviolability of sovereignty, acknowledging natural resources as part of our heritage and the promotion of security, justice, and peace.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): We commend the Venezuelan presidency and Ms. Delcy Eloina Rodríguez Gómez, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, for convening today's high-level open debate on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which govern international relations among Member States.

Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to upholding the Charter of the United Nations. The principles of Kazakhstan's peaceful and harmonious multisector foreign policy are inspired by those enshrined in the Charter. It is the single, internationally recognized document that provides the architecture for the work of the United Nations and the Council. The principles of sovereignty, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other States, as enshrined in the Charter, are all fundamental and should be respected by all States Members of the United Nations.

Kazakhstan is seriously concerned about violations of those fundamental principles and strongly believes in the need for all Member States to be guided by them. As we have observed in recent years, such purposes and principles have not been respected or adhered to fully, which has lead to the conflicts and human tragedies that we witness today. In that connection, we refer to the Security Council's recent record in not being able to address the many issues facing us today. That is why President Nursultan Nazarbayev, at the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventieth session, proposed to convene in 2016 a high-level United Nations event to pledge adherence to the basic tenets of international law (see A/70/PV.13). In that connection, Kazakhstan fully supported the adoption of the declaration on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations last September.

The security challenges that we face currently are far more complex, multifaceted and increasingly transnational. Kazakhstan therefore attaches the utmost importance to the security of civilians in conflict situations, as is evident in its engagement in United Nations peacekeeping operations in Western Sahara and Cote d'Ivoire. The protection of civilians has always been a priority for my country, which has supported Governments in our region and beyond with assistance aimed at conflict prevention and resolution and humanitarian assistance, thus making a significant contribution to regional peace and security. My delegation is currently active in the gender entity of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and encourages countries to implement resolution 1325 (2000) in particular. Kazakhstan, as a Member State, has acceded to the code of conduct regarding Security

Council action against genocide and crimes against humanity or war crimes.

The role of regional organizations has been greatly enhancwinig to the escalation of the potential for conflict seen in various regions. Kazakhstan therefore encourages more vigorous and active cooperation on the part of the United Nations and its Member States with regional and subregional organizations in settling conflicts, as set out in the Charter. My country has therefore supported activities of United Nations regional offices, which serve as platforms for preventive diplomacy. We have proposed the establishment of a United Nations regional hub for sustainable development and humanitarian assistance in Almaty. The hub would complement the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia in the vast territory of the Eurasian region and would focus on early warning, prevention, dialogue, mediation and post-conflict resolution.

While sanctions play a role in preventing conflicts and preserving peace, they should only be imposed by the Security Council with proper assessment of their impact and should not be imposed unilaterally. The national interests of Member States must be balanced with greater objectivity and global perspectives.

According to the Charter, the General Assembly and the Security Council are paramount bodies of equal standing. That original intent needs to be restored by the Security Council, while allowing greater importance for the General Assembly and learning from the collective wisdom of Member States. We therefore encourage closer collaboration among the Presidents of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, so as to create a new global development strategy for peace. We stand ready to work with the Council and Member States to uphold the Charter of the United Nations nationally, regionally and globally.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Reyes Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome the presidency of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. It is our honour to participate under its guidance in this debate.

The historical reflection on and firm adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations are essential obligations for all those committed to international peace and security. The Charter of the Organization, in its Preamble, calls for saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, practicing tolerance and living together in peace with one another as good neighbours. The Charter's first goal is the maintenance of international peace and security, a precept that over the years has become an inviolable right of all peoples and nations. However, its fulfilment requires the elimination of threats that conspire against its full realization and the eradication of all violations of the Charter and all threats to the right to peace, such as interference in the internal affairs of States, acts of aggression, wars that seek control of natural resources and non-conventional wars. In recent years, such wars have become the most serious attacks against the exercise of people's right to self-determination.

We must also oppose the application of unilateral, coercive measures and the unjust and exclusive international order that we have today; we must oppose the inequality and selfishness that result from neo-liberal globalization, discrimination and xenophobia, as well as the growing aggressiveness of the NATO military doctrine. That also presupposes the unlimited recognition of the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful solution of international disputes, respect for political independence and the political, socioeconomic and cultural system that nations have freely decided on for themselves, and the rejection of the threat or use of threat of force against another State.

The countries of our region clearly understood those concerns when, at the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana in January 2014, we formally approved the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace. That is a document of transcendental and historic importance that is fully applicable to the relations of the countries of the region with other countries of the world.

While it is true that sustainable development cannot be achieved without peace and stability, it is also true that there will not be peace or stability without development; that is true, yet millions of people continue to be condemned to hunger, poverty and despair. We therefore affirm that the prevention of conflicts and the maintenance of peace require solidarity, cooperation and international assistance, as well as joint action to eradicate poverty, unemployment, hunger, inequality and their underlying causes.

We recognize that the Security Council has an important role to play in the maintenance of international peace and security by virtue of the responsibility conferred upon it by the Charter. That is why the members of the Council must be the first countries to support peaceful solutions and exercise firm, effective and clear resistance against the recourse to war and the violation of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. They must be the first countries to exhaust all possible avenues to preserve life and prevent the promotion and application of a policy of regime change and prevent the violation of people's right to self-determination. They must stop abusing the veto in their attempts to ensure the impunity of the perpetrators of the serious violations of international law and human rights that victimize the people of Palestine. They must be the first countries to reject any attempts to reinterpret the mandate of the Council and to usurp from it the role assigned to other principle organs of the Organization, particularly the General Assembly.

Seventy years have gone by since the founding of the Organization. It must be strengthened. In particular, the Security Council must be made democratic in order to convert it into a model of transparency, democracy and genuine participation. The General Assembly must be revitalized so that it can play its central role in achieving the rights of peoples and of every human being in a just, democratic and fair international order. We also understand that peacekeeping operations are becoming increasingly complex and involved. They may be indispensable in certain circumstances, but they cannot be a substitute for the need to address and resolve the deep-seated causes of conflicts and they cannot be a replacement for diplomacy and political dialogue.

Many are saying today that the rule of law at the international level should become the cornerstone of relations between States. For Cuba, that means that the principles set out in the Charter and in international law must be applied fully and non-selectively across the board as essential requirements for peaceful coexistance between nations, sustainble development and the promotion and protection of the human rights of all. The rule of law in international relations is therefore incompatible with unilateralism and economic, commercial and financial measures and policies that run counter to international law; with any effort aimed at subverting the political, economic or social order freely chosen by a people or aimed at interfering in a country's internal affairs; and with measures intended to foment conflict in sovereign States for the benefit of actions aimed and domination and hegemonic influence. That is why we firmly reject all actions aimed at destabilizing the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, which are in flagrant violation of the requirements for the rule of law in international relations, as well as the actions aimed at intervening against Ecuador, Bolivia and other nations of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Cuba would like to reaffirm here in this forum the unswerving commitment of the Cuban people to the Charter of the United Nations, in particular to its purposes and principles. It reiterates its vocation for peace and unlimited respect for the sovereignty of States and its commitment to the realization of the rights of peoples to development, to a just, democratic and fair international order, to solidarity between peoples across the world, to a healthy environment, including one in which everyone can live free of the ongoing threat posed by nuclear weapons, a threat to the very existence of the human species.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Morales López (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and its delegation on their leadership of the work of the Council during the month of February, and thank them for convening this open debate and for the concept paper before us (S/2016/103, annex).

In my statement, I shall raise three issues. First, I reiterate the importance that Colombia attaches to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the Organization. Those purposes and principles are not a mere listing of general values and aims; they are the very cement holding the structure together and the foundation of the Organization, so that Member States can collectively work to promote a peaceful, prosperous and fair world.

Sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, the prohibition of the use or threat of use of force and the peaceful settlement of international disputes are the fundamental pillars underpinning international law and international relations. They are as valid today as they have been over the past seven decades. My country's views were expressed by our representative Alfonso Lopez in the general debate on 30 October 1946,

> "With that same optimism we felt during all the initial stages of the organization of the United Nations... we are now ready to support any initiative tending to establish once and for all throughout the world the triumph of reason over force, of right over arbitrariness, and of liberty over slavery in any form" (*A/PV.43, p.867-868*).

The second issue I would like to address is the Organization's need for flexibility and adaptability. In the last 70 years, the world has continuously experienced the turbulence of events and the undeniable evolution of, and increase in, conflicts and their complexity. Those conflicts permanently defy the adaptability and responsiveness of the United Nations to the new threats to international peace and security and the growing need to ensure comprehensive sustainable development and the protection of human rights.

Finally, I would like to refer to the need to rely on the tools provided under Chapter VI of the San Francisco Charter with greater frequency. There is an old Spanish proverb that "prevention is better than cure"; and in diplomacy, as in health, identification and early-warning systems are essential to preventing the multiplication of conflicts and the increase in peacekeeping operations authorized under Chapter VII.

The report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (see S/2015/446) and of the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture (see S/2015/490) concur on the primacy of political authorities responding adequately and appropriately to situations of conflict from their initial stages. That approach does not neglect the proportionate use of force in cases where such is urgent and unavoidable. However, we must remember that peace cannot be imposed, but must come from the players themselves and should respond to the particularities of each environment and each society so that it can become truly sustainable.

My country, which has suffered the ravages of a conflict that has lasted for more than 50 years, has valiantly chosen to achieve peace. That is why we highlight the Council's decision, reflected in resolution 2261 (2016), of 25 January, which establishes a political mission in Colombia, in which this body expressed its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes. As expressed by Foreign Minister María Ángela Holguín Cuellar on the occasion of the adoption of the resolution,

> "It is an opportunity for the United Nations and the international community to enjoy success as they are being asked for their support in the implementation of an agreement in a conflict that is being resolved by national stakeholders through negotiation and dialogue.
>
> "I would like to convey to the members of the Council that their willingness to work with Colombia on this matter will be essential to the success of the process. We know that by remaining focused on our mandate we will achieve conclusive and definitive results for peace in Colombia." (*S/PV.7609, p. 10*).

With that, as 70 years ago at the dawn of the Organization, and as we have been reiterating since, Colombia reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Roet (Israel): Seventy years ago, when representatives of 50 nations met to establish the founding vision for the newly formed United Nations, they were not engaging in a merely academic exercise. The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations emerged from a painful confrontation with the horrors of the Second World War. Nations of the world understood that, in order to achieve all the lofty principles outlined in the Charter, the family of nations would have to stand firm in defence of the Charter's first principle, in Article 1, namely,

> "[t]o maintain international peace and security, and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace".

Today we confront a new reality that requires learning that lesson anew. The purposes and principles of the Charter are only as strong and durable as the international will to uphold them.

The primary challenge to the founding vision of the Charter is no longer that of conflict between States, but the explosion of violence and brutality in failing and failed States. Nowhere is that more evident than in the Middle East. the civil war in Syria is approaching its fifth year, with little hope for an end to the madness. Yet the international community continues to fail to respond effectively to the scale of the disaster. News of the siege and deliberate starvation of the 40,000 residents of Madaya by Hizbullah and Al-Assad forces

only underscores the magnitude of the horrors and the futility of the international response.

Of course, Syria is not alone. From Libya to Iraq and from Somalia to Yemen, insurgencies, proxy wars and civil wars are transforming those countries into living nightmares for their inhabitants. In vast stretches of the Middle East, the promises of the United Nations Charter have become but a distant dream.

The numerous violent radical extremists who pose a major challenge to global peace and security have filled the vacuum of law and order by imposing their fanatical rule on growing numbers of people across the world. Terrorist groups such as Da'esh and Al-Qaida, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab, Hamas and Hizbullah continue to make a mockery of the values and principles this institution was founded to uphold. Those fundamentalist groups represent a fundamental threat to the world of freedom and dignity envisioned in the Charter. Yet this institution has failed to draw a clear line in the sand in defence of the principles of our founding document.

Like many other countries around the world, we in Israel live with the consequences of this failure on our own border. Hizbullah has amassed over 100,000 rockets ready to be fired at any Israeli city. In fact, it has transformed numerous villages in southern Lebanon into outposts of terror. This is the true face of Hizbullah — a brutal organization that deliberately targets Israeli civilians and uses Lebanese civilians as human shields, which is a double war crime.

Instead of clear and unequivocal condemnations of the blatant violations of resolution 1701 (2006), the Security Council has remained silent. Hizbullah's utter disregard for the lives of the people of Israel and the people of Lebanon is in opposition to every principle this institution stands for. If we are truly committed to upholding the principles of the Charter, silence is not an option.

On our southern border, Hamas prepares for the next round of conflict. The terror group controlling Gaza continues to stockpile rockets and dig terror tunnels to threaten Israelis towns in southern Israel and beyond. Yet when Israel brought clear and indisputable evidence and facts of these intentions to the attention of the Security Council, the silence was deafening. Even when Hamas operatives admitted — actually boasted — of their preparations for war, the Council could not bring itself to speak out against Hamas by name; there was not even a whisper of condemnation.

It is tragic that some in the Chamber seem eager to ignore Hamas's iron-fisted grip on Gaza and to explain away their ongoing campaign of terror against Israel. Just two weeks ago, we reminded the Chamber of the Council resolution against terrorism, which declares that

> "any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed" (*resolution 2249 (2015), fourth preambular paragraph*).

And yet the Council has not lived up to this commitment when it comes to terror attacks against Israel. That wilful disregard for the peace and security of the people of Israel undermines the credibility of this institution and casts doubt on its fidelity to the principles of the Charter. In order to achieve the worthy goals of peace and reconciliation, it is time to state the reality as it is, end the politicization and stop singling out Israel.

Yet only this morning we witnessed here in the Chamber how two members of the Security Council — Venezuela and Malaysia — proved yet again that singling out my country and ignoring Palestinian terror attacks has become a common practice. Ignoring terror when it is politically convenient only encourages more brutality and more bloodshed. I call on the Security Council to condemn by name those who instigate violence and carry out terror attacks, whether it is Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant/Da'esh or Hamas, and hold them accountable.

Ignoring Palestinian accountability and supporting rejectionist policies towards direct negotiations is another example of overlooking the true spirit of the Charter when it comes to Israel. Just this morning, in a striking rejection of relentless international efforts to broker peace negotiations, Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Riyad Al-Malki said,

> "We will never go back and sit again in direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations."

This statement leaves no doubt as to the Palestinians' intention and should be widely condemned.

The commitment of the Council to the purposes and principles of the Charter will be measured by how it responds to threats to peace and security and whether it responds to all such threats. At a time when cruel

dictators engage in the mass murder of their own people and fanatical groups spread their message of hatred and intolerance by the sword, a united stand against terror is needed now more than ever.

Millions around the world look to us to defend their rights and their very lives, and they are losing faith. We must do more to help them. For the sake of these men, women and children, let us come together to meet these crucial challenges and leave the next generation a legacy equal to the vision of the United Nations Charter.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Biagini (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and wishes to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

Last October, at the initiative of Spain, Member States recommitted themselves to the principles and the values of the Charter. These principles and values hold the same relevance today as they did 70 years ago. They are the bedrock of the effective multilateralism that the United Nations embodies when we work together constructively. We must continue to promote and strengthen these values to address today's pressing challenges: from climate change to sustainable development; from preventing violent extremism to addressing regional conflicts; and from managing migration to finding solutions to the unprecedented number of refugees.

This is how our Organization has been able to achieve significant results in the past 70 years, lifting millions out of poverty, promoting the rule of law and respect for human rights, and advancing fundamental freedoms. This is how we reached milestone agreements last year such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) and the Paris Agreement. Rest assured of Italy's continuous commitment.

At the same time, 70 years have passed, and a fresh look is needed. Allow me to make some brief points.

First, concerning awareness, we must recognize that today's security challenges are different from those of the past and that the security landscape before us is rapidly changing. While respecting the different roles and mandates of the United Nations organs, closer attention should be paid to broader security issues, which are a matter of concern for a growing part of the membership, and closer cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council should be sought. As a best practice, I would point to the open debate held during the New Zealand presidency of the Council on the security challenges facing the small island developing States and also recall the prompt and efficient response taken by the Council with regard to the Ebola crisis.

Secondly, with respect to fostering an integrated approach and addressing the root causes of instability, I would note that today's challenges are complex by nature. Among the merits of Agenda 2030 is the fact that it introduces an integrated approach to security; just as the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will promote peace, so is peace essential to the SDGs. It is therefore vital to understand and address the root causes of today's challenges. The implementation of the recently adopted Sustainable Development Goals will also play a critical role in the prevention of violent extremism and contribute to the effective management of migrations and of the unprecedented number of refugees and internally displaced persons.

This leads me to my third point, which is also my final one: revitalizing the preventive tools at the disposal of the Council. The rhetorical battle on conflict prevention has been won. There is broad consensus on its centrality and on the great risks that can stem from inaction. Not only is prevention the right choice: it is also the smart choice.

The emerging broad consensus among the membership should now be operationalized by strengthening the tools of preventive diplomacy, including financially. It is thus important to renew our collective focus on the peaceful settlement of disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter and to develop our partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, in particular with the African Union, under Chapter VIII.

In the same spirit, Italy believes in closer cooperation between the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, for instance by inviting the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to participate in Council meetings as appropriate.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Eritrea.

Mr. Tesfay (Eritrea): At the outset, I would like to thank the presidency of the Bolivarian Republic of

Venezuela for having organized this open debate under the theme "Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security", which is timely and most appropriate.

Let me also seize this opportunity to express appreciation to the Secretary-General for his remarks this morning.

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and ensure justice and development for all nations. In this dynamic and evolving era, maintaining global peace and security has been and remains one of the cardinal goals of the United Nations; yet conflicts and wars have become a constant feature of our lives. Many of these wars are waged in total disregard for the Charter of the United Nations and, increasingly, without its mandate. As a result, collective and coordinated remedial action is required by all countries, large and small.

The world has changed almost beyond recognition since 1945. The global demographic, economic, political and cultural realities of the world and of States bear little resemblance to the past. And yet the United Nations, the Organization that supposedly represents the entire community of nations and the peoples of the world, remains thoroughly dominated by the few and has marginalized the overwhelming majority.

The international community has a choice to make: do we want to see a United Nations that is an effective multilateral instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security, or one that continues to maintain its present archaic nature, with dominant and powerful countries misusing it to justify their hostile and hegemonic policies towards nations that do not dance to their tune? If the choice is the latter, the confidence of the majority of nations in, and their support for, the United Nations will be further eroded.

Every Government and nation has been calling for the revitalization and restructuring of the United Nations. However, two decades after reform of the Security Council was formally placed on the agenda of the United Nations, and despite many extensive and viable proposals, we are where we were 70 years ago.

It is vital that all nations, small and large, and peoples as well as political and social forces that stand for peace, independence, respect for international law, justice, equity and sustainable development, forge a common front in order to defend the time-tested principles of the equal sovereignty of nations, respect for territorial integrity, and peaceful coexistence. The right of nations to choose their social and economic path of development must not only be respected but must be the main principle of the United Nations. Respect for the dignity and rights of citizens and migrants and fidelity to the Charter of the United Nations and international law should also be guiding principles. The United Nations Charter and its principles must not be compromised for diplomatic and political expediency.

To underline and understand how those principles have been compromised and abused, it is appropriate to mention Eritrea's historical and current experience with the United Nations. Eritrea has been and is today a victim of the hypocritical working methods of the United Nations, which is fully dominated and controlled by a few permanent members of the Security Council.

For the geopolitical interests of the major Powers, and becoming a victim of the Cold War, six decades ago — in 1952, to be precise — the Eritrean people were denied their inalienable right to self-determination and independence by the United Nations. For 30 years, the Eritrean people were savagely bombed from the air and on the ground, with the aim of crushing their just struggle for independence. However, through sheer determination and a grass-roots participatory system, the Eritrean people were able to achieve their independence on 24 May 1991.

Today, once again, the Eritrean people are being subjected to unfair and illegitimate sanctions by the Security Council on the basis of fabricated allegations that have proved to be unfounded. Moreover, the Security Council continues to neglect the illegal occupation of our sovereign territory by Ethiopia. That occupation continues in violation of international law, several Security Council resolutions and the final and binding delimitation and demarcation decisions by the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission, the implementation of which is guaranteed by the United Nations.

In conclusion, Eritrea endorses the concept note submitted by the presidency (see S/2016/103, annex). Eritrea also strongly believes that there is no other international body better suited than the United Nations to handle regional and international issues. Yes, it has

to be maintained, but it also has to be reinvigorated, enhanced and reformed.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Kuwait.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait): I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of the member States of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on its presidency of the Security Council this month, as well as for preparing the concept note (see S/2016/103, annex) for today's deliberations on the theme "Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security".

I speak today as Chair of the second-largest intergovernmental organization after the United Nations. The member States of the OIC are bound by its Charter, the Preamble of which reaffirms the commitment of its member States to the Charter of the United Nations and stresses their determination to contribute to international peace and security, understanding and dialogue among civilizations, cultures and religions and to promote and encourage friendly relations and good neighbourliness, mutual respect and cooperation. All of those principles are in harmony with those enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Today's topic of discussion is therefore of significance to the member States of the OIC, as it forms a core pillar of the obligations of their membership and work within our organization.

The Charter of the United Nations lays a framework for modern international relations that, if applied and adhered to, will no doubt lead to the ultimate goal of the United Nations and of the Security Council, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. Sovereignty, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other States are all lofty principles enshrined in the Charters of both the United Nations and the OIC.

However, we have witnessed over the years — and even now as we speak — failures to respect and adhere to those purposes and principles, which have led to the conflicts and human suffering that the world is witnessing today. We can point to the Council's recent record in addressing the many issues facing us, such as the question of Palestine, as evidence of the paralysis in the Council. I cannot but mention the continuing plight of the Palestinian people and condemn the illegal policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power, in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. The member States of the OIC call for urgent measures, particularly by the Security Council, aimed at bringing an end, without delay, to the Israeli occupation, and at achieving a peaceful settlement that will guarantee the enjoyment by the Palestinian people of their inalienable rights.

The most notable evidence of the Council's paralysis is the continuing crisis in Syrian. In that regard, we are appalled by the humanitarian situation in Syria and the great suffering there. We call on all parties to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular resolution 2254 (2015), which call for safe and unhindered humanitarian access to those in need. We stress the need for a political solution to the crisis.

That leads me to turn to a matter of importance to the OIC: the encouragement of regional and subregional organizations to take an active role in the settlement of conflicts, which was, rightly, mentioned in the concept note prepared by the presidency, in line with what is stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. The security challenges that we face today are far more complex, multifaceted and unconventional than ever before. No longer are security challenges restricted within borders; rather, they have become transnational. No longer can we say that a security threat or challenge on the other side of the world will not reach us or that we are immune to it. No longer can we say that we are protected from such threats by geography, topography, oceans and distance. Those days are all but gone.

As our world has become more interconnected and interdependent, so too have the challenges we face, thus requiring us to enhance our collective efforts to tackle global threats. However, it is not enough to tackle security challenges on a country-to-country level, they must also be tackled at the level of regional and subregional organizations. Such organizations can coordinate and cooperate in a concerted effort to ensure the collective peace and security of our peoples. The OIC would like to underline a fundamental aspect of the Charter of the United Nations that ought to be utilized in a more effective manner, namely, the resort to regional agencies or arrangements in order to settle

disputes, as stipulated in Chapter VIII, on regional arrangements, and Article 33 of the Charter.

The OIC is an important partner of the United Nations in peace, security and the fostering of a culture of peace at the global level. The OIC stands ready to make meaningful contributions, and reiterates its wish to cooperate with the United Nations in conflict prevention and resolution, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, the promotion of good governance at the national and international levels, combating international terrorism, fighting extremism, countering religious intolerance, including Islamophobia, the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, humanitarian assistance and capacity-building.

Regional organizations, as stipulated in the Charter, have a significant role to play in the prevention, management and resolution of crises and in the maintenance of international peace and security. It is imperative and incumbent upon us — States and regional organizations — to work more closely and more collectively in order to contribute to the promotion of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Schieb (Germany): Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Seventy years ago, on 17 January 1946, the Security Council convened for the very first time. Horrified by the destructiveness of the Second World War, 11 nations gathered in London with one all-important goal in mind — the maintenance of international peace and security.

Today, that aspiration is as important as ever, as conflict continues to rear its ugly head across the globe. Syria is torn by civil war. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham continues to wreak havoc across the Middle East and beyond. The unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine are at stake. North Korea has allegedly tested a nuclear device and launched a rocket in defiance of Security Council resolutions. Territorial disputes persist around the world. Everywhere we look, conflict appears to abound.

Yet, let us take courage in the ambitious activities of the United Nations. Despite the inherent challenges involved, the United Nations has created a crucial framework for engagement designed to facilitate international peace and security. It is that system of collective security — based on the prohibition of the use or threat of force and the duty to settle disputes peacefully — that has allowed the United Nations to act with purpose and resolve. Over the years, the United Nations has helped end conflicts in dozens of countries. Moreover, the United Nations has served as the forum for negotiations to contribute to and consolidate peace. By providing basic security guarantees and responding to crises, the United Nations has helped to abate conflicts, form habits of cooperation, and develop shared norms and perceptions. Its capacities to assist in restoring, keeping and consolidating peace deserves, therefore, to be strengthened further, as do its mechanisms aimed at preventing gross human rights violations and violent conflict within and among sovereign States.

As the concept note prepared for this meeting (S/2016/103, annex) rightly points out, sovereignty and the sovereign equality of States are, and remain, key principles set out in the Charter. However, at the 2005 World Summit, United Nations Member States spelled out the principles of the concept of responsibility to protect. They declared their willingness

> "to take collective action ... through the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, on a case-by-case basis ... should peaceful means be inadequate and national authorities are manifestly failing to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity." (*General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 139*)

Germany continues to support the concept of the responsibility to protect. We also support the initiative by France and Mexico to limit the use of the veto by permanent members of the Security Council in cases of genocide.

While rightly praising the crucial importance of the United Nations system, we should not lose sight of the necessity of reforming it, in particular the Security Council. Security Council reform must include both expanding the membership of the Council as well as improving its working methods. A majority of the Member States has voiced support for adding new permanent and non-permanent seats to better reflect the geo-political realities of the twenty-first century. How can it be, to give but one particularly pertinent

example, that no African country is represented with a permanent seat at the Security Council table? In addition, improvement of the Council's working methods is crucial. However, that cannot be a substitute for an urgently needed structural reform of this organ. A more representative, legitimate and effective Security Council is needed more than ever, while also taking into account that more Member States have the capacity and willingness to take on the crucial responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. We, together with our group of four partners — including Brazil, India and Japan — stand ready to engage with all Member States in concrete, text-based negotiations in the framework of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform to arrive at such a reform — which is long overdue.

In conclusion, let me emphasize again that the United Nations is indispensable to our mutual peace and security. Despite its many trials and tribulations, the United Nations remains essential to the peaceful resolution of conflict. As long as there are people who continue to suffer from the scourges of war, Germany will work tirelessly with the United Nations to end their pain. For their plight is our plight.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for allowing my delegation to share its views with the Security Council. Let me start by congratulating Venezuela on assuming the Security Council presidency for the month of February, for the proposed programme of work and for initiating this important debate. I would like to also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing this morning.

I must underscore that, while the theme of our debate today is self-explanatory, respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations is clearly an obligation to which everyone must adhere bona fide. However, we note that political will retains significant effect in terms of respect of those principles and their interpretation. Seventy years after the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, collectively preventing threats to peace and developing friendly relations among Member States based on respect for the principle of the equal rights and self-determination of peoples remain purposes and goals to be sought by all.

Since the signing of the Charter, the United Nations has made a substantial contribution to peace and security, although many of us continue to expect more. Numerous peoples have freed themselves from the scourge of colonialism and have shared their contributions to global peace and security. Recognition of the United Nations and adherence to its purposes and principles was very often — if not always — the first act undertaken by liberated States in proclaiming themselves Member States. Needless to say, the purposes and principles of the Charter are still immensely valid.

Today, we encounter new difficulties in dealing with threats to international peace and security. The lack of solutions in prevailing cases of uncertainty, such as the lingering decolonization cases or long-term conflicts, such as in the Middle East, demand our renewed and truly effective commitment. If we are to recognize and respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security, we must ensure equity, transparency, accountability and effectiveness. The relevance and legitimacy of the work and missions of the United Nations are at stake. In that regard, we believe that a reinvigorated General Assembly in a more responsive environment, exerting its full role and authority, would significantly contribute to improving international governance in questions relating to international peace and security.

It is evident that the Charter must be interpreted in the light of its purposes and principles. In that context, allow me to briefly highlight some aspects.

First, the Security Council is primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. Nevertheless, in accordance with Articles 11 and 99 of the Charter, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General each have a respective role in recommending and bringing to the attention of the Council any matter related to the maintenance of international peace and security. That role is not always and not sufficiently carried out, thus diminishing the effectiveness of the United Nations.

Second, the founding fathers of the United Nations were visionary in giving regional organizations — which lacked importance and even existence in 1945 — a specific role; under Chapters VI and VIII, they have a crucial role in connection with the maintenance of international peace and security. Therefore, the partnership between the United Nations and regional

organizations, including the African Union, should be articulated in full respect of those provisions, notably when it comes to the need to support regional efforts in matters of peace and security.

Third, the cornerstone of our strong attachment to the United Nations is, and must always be, the peaceful settlement of disputes, and therefore prevention. In that context, the use of force should always be the last recourse, when deemed necessary and after obviously exerting all possibilities for a peaceful settlement. It must receive United Nations approval, specifically of the Security Council. The Council and the United Nations must, in all cases, think, prepare and act for the day after and the impact of any sanctions, or legal use of force on the countries and regions affected. The cure cannot be more harmful than the illness.

Fourth, specific and unexpected threats to international peace and security, such as those involving non-State actors and terrorism, should be addressed according to the Charter. Moreover, we strongly believe that in such cases the States affected, in particular Member States in the vicinity of the areas affected, should be associated accordingly in all decision-making processes of the Security Council.

Fifth, we strongly believe that respect for human rights and non-interference in internal affairs are not incompatible. We cannot accept meddling in the internal affairs of Member States. And we say very clearly that we simply cannot stand still before mass atrocities, regardless of where or by whom they are committed.

Sixth, we need to look into the issue of United Nations reform with renewed spirit and resolve. Respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter today calls today for an accelerated reform of the United Nations. It means that, as we strongly advocate in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and beyond, we should first reform the Security Council, both structurally and its working methods — an issue which we have recently debated here. The specific question of the so-called veto power is a multifaceted one. But whatever angle one looks at it from, even historically, it was in no way meant to impede effective action.

Seventh, and finally, as has been the case with other open debates on issues of this kind, and in order to assist in related debates, we fully support the principle of a summary to be produced by the presidency and circulated as an official document of the United Nations.

We understand that the trail is arduous, but it is necessary if we really want to preserve the relevance, efficiency and, beyond that, the legitimacy and respect that should always accompany the work, missions and goals of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): Pakistan is pleased to see the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela presiding over the Security Council, and we appreciate its convening of today's debate on a subject of fundamental importance. There is no better way to mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations than by renewing our collective pledge to fully and unequivocally respect its purposes and principles. We also thank the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing this morning.

The Charter of the United Nations does not just collectively bind us to efforts aimed at saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, it is also a shared commitment to creating a world order based on the rule of international law. Of course, the Charter's greatest success is that for 70 years there has been no general conflagration. But today we see a world that is hardly at peace, where conflicts abound, human-rights abuses remain rampant and humanitarian law is flouted in open violation of the Charter's principles. We have yet to see a world order emerge that is based on justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law and, most critically, on the purposes and principles of the Charter itself.

Member States solemnly entered into our covenant in the trust that those principles were immutable. Yet we see them flouted in pursuit of narrow national interests, especially by the powerful. We see unilateralism and arbitrariness in consequential decisions of war and peace. We see unwarranted foreign adventures, and then we also see their unforeseen and unintended but devastating consequences. The statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, whose members represent more than half of the membership of the United Nations and with which we fully align ourselves, reflects cracks in the trust represented by the Charter. That must be remedied if we are to advance and augment the moral authority of the United Nations as a just and credible organization that safeguards the interests of all Member States as equals, in accordance with international law. I would

like to make a few suggestions on how to rebuild that trust.

First, the management of peace and security must be based on a genuine consensus forged on the basis of the principles of the Charter, not on power politics. A cooperative approach, rather than the imposition of coercive measures shaped by the interests of powerful States, should guide our actions.

Secondly, there should be a renewed focus on using peaceful means to address breaches of international peace and to settle international disputes, with wider and more effective use of Chapter VI measures.

Thirdly, it is the Organization's responsibility to prevent violations of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States. The use or the threat of the use of force, which is in contravention of international law, must be censured and effectively deterred. The failure to do so has already created the impression that the United Nations has become an instrument of the powerful rather than a guardian of the principles of international law.

Fourthly, the United Nations must uphold the principle of the sovereign equality of States. Equality includes the concept of equal opportunity, which is a safeguard against discriminatory measures and policies. That should be at the heart of the reform of any United Nations institution.

Fifthly, the United Nations must fulfil its purpose of developing friendly relations among nations predicated on the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples. It is counter-intuitive to expect peaceful and friendly relations among nations if the United Nations cannot guarantee the application of the fundamental principle of self-determination.

The peoples of the world expect fairness and justice from the United Nations. It is our responsibility as Member States to ensure that we abide by the principles that we agreed to seven decades ago. We agreed on them because we believed in their utility in promoting our collective interest. We reaffirm our commitment to them today because we continue to believe that adhering to them will save us from the scourge of war. Let us therefore translate those beliefs, commitments and statements into action. For, if we are unable to do so, we will not only endanger the progress achieved in previous years, we also risk making the institution appear irrelevant in a world marked by increasing turmoil and trouble, in which insecurity prevails and injustice persists. That would be a huge price to pay, especially at a time when so many conflicts are devastating the lives of millions of people and raising questions in people's minds about the relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations in managing international peace and security.

Before concluding, let me once again pledge my country's commitment to translating our trust in the Charter of the United Nations into practice.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union, and I would like to make some additional comments in my national capacity.

Seventy years have passed since the creation of the United Nations, and yet millions continue to suffer from the scourge of war, the number of people displaced has reached unprecedented levels and the scope of our humanitarian crises is catastrophic. That is not because the principles of the Charter of the United Nations are deficient, but because we have failed to uphold what we pledged to the generations to come. It is therefore indeed high time for the international community to stand up firmly for the principles enshrined in the Charter. Only through respect for international law, including obligations arising from treaties, can we maintain peace and security, provide for the protection of human rights and create the conditions for social progress and larger freedoms.

We are deeply distressed by the violent developments and rapid deterioration of the security situation in the Middle East. I would like to reiterate Georgia's strong condemnation of every despicable act of terrorism and violence against civilian populations. Terrorist groups such as Da'esh threaten not just the nations of the Middle East but every country across the globe, large or small, primarily because such groups erode the political and legal foundations of the international system.

Contrary to expectations in the early 1990s, Europe today is neither free from confrontation nor at peace. Regional security is being deliberately challenged by Russia's ongoing aggression against Georgia. In its bid to change the geopolitical situation in the so-called near-abroad, including Ukraine, the Russian Federation has gone as far as to redraw European borders by using

aggression, occupation and annexation, at the cost of the lives of many innocent people along the way. Another testament to that fact is the situation in the occupied Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia. The aggression against my country that started in the early 1990s culminated in 2008 in a full-scale invasion, followed by illegal recognition — by only three countries — of the so-called independence of the occupied regions.

For its part, Georgia has continued to dedicate itself to a peaceful and constructive approach. We have been consistently committed to diplomacy and a peaceful resolution of the conflict with the Russian Federation. We greatly value the international discussions in Geneva and will continue our constructive participation in that key format, established for the implementation of the ceasefire agreement of 12 August 2008, in good faith. Over the past few years, we have redoubled our efforts to normalize relations with Moscow in order to create an environment conducive to confidence-building and conflict resolution.

The results, however, have been limited to economic and humanitarian areas. Despite our constructive approach, the Russian Federation has concluded dozens of so-called treaties and agreements with the occupation regimes, which provide a pretext for its continued illegal military presence. It has signed so-called comprehensive alliance treaties, providing for full mergers in every public domain and the open delegation of all powers to the Russian Federation, and installed barbed-wire fences and other artificial obstacles along the occupation line that divides families and communities. That chain of events reflects a policy aimed at the de facto annexation of Georgia's regions.

The recently adopted so-called laws regulating the status of foreigners and entry into the regions constitute yet another discriminatory act against ethnic Georgians, restricting their fundamental rights and freedoms and further isolating the occupied regions of Georgia. Pursuant to those laws, a new wave of so-called passportization is being carried out that will further deteriorate conditions for the Georgian population living in the Gali district, who will not be eligible for the proper identity documents and will therefore face hardships regarding their property rights, their rights to work, their freedom of movement across the occupation line and residence. This dangerous process can potentially become the grounds for another wave of ethnic cleansing against Georgians.

In conclusion, let me once again stress that Georgia remains a strong advocate of the principles of international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter. We all should take more tangible and resolute steps towards the realization of our common goals of achieving world peace and strengthening international security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): My delegation thanks the Venezuelan presidency of the Council for convening this open debate and for the thought-provoking concept note (S/2016/103, annex). We also thank the Secretary-General for his introductory briefing.

We take this opportunity to reiterate Bangladesh's unwavering commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including in the maintenance of international peace and security. I wish to recall the words of the father of our nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, in his maiden address to the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session on 25 September 1974:

> "The noble ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are the very ideals for which millions of our people have made the supreme sacrifice. I know that the souls of our martyrs join us in pledging that the Bangalee nation fully commits itself to the building of a world order in which the aspiration of all men [and women] for peace and justice will be realized" (*A/PV.2243, para. 2*).

True to his words, Bangladesh has consistently upheld the renunciation of war, respect for the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States as the cornerstones of its foreign policy. We have pursued the peaceful settlement of disputes with our partners through dialogues, negotiations and arbitration, based on the principle of mutual respect. The determined leadership shown by our Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, in amicably resolving the long-pending land and maritime boundary issues with our neighbours has further reinforced our commitment to the ideals and values of the Charter of the United Nations.

We have seen many efforts over the past seven decades to justify deviations from the core Charter principles under several theoretical doctrines and

concepts. Those concepts have come and gone, mostly in response to the demands of realpolitik. The Charter principles have, however, survived the test of time as the bedrock of the international rule of law.

It would be pragmatic to acknowledge that the notions of national sovereignty and internal affairs have evolved over time since the promulgation of the Charter of the United Nations. The unprecedented level and scale of engagement of a diverse set of actors in shaping international affairs and policies have added layers to the traditional concept of sovereign equality. The preponderance of internecine strife and violence has also altered the landscape of armed conflicts around the world. Under such circumstances, it may be advisable for the entire United Nations membership to engage in serious introspection about the possible implications of the emerging global realities vis-à-vis the Charter principles.

The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization could be one of the suitable platforms for embarking on such reflections and deliberations. However, the continued impasse in the work of the Committee does not hold much promise for the collective willingness of Member States to leverage the existing possibilities. It is also perhaps symptomatic that the issue is not being directly approached in the context of the ongoing discussions on the revitalization of the General Assembly and Security Council reform.

Respect for the core principles is critical for preserving the Charter's primacy on the pacific settlement of disputes and for resorting to coercive or enforcement measures only as measures of last resort. After all, the toughest price for any such measures are borne by the people in general. For third parties, sanctions regimes are often couched in legal and technical complications, creating possibilities for lapses in compliance. These are further complicated by unilateral prohibitive measures whose interface with United Nations sanctions is not always explained in clear, understandable terms.

In Bangladesh, we have a law giving effect to Security Council resolution within our domestic jurisdiction. It is therefore in our obvious interest to see that the resolutions emerge through a participatory, consultative and accommodating process within the Council. The exercise of the veto power needs to be reviewed for all practical purposes.

As underscored by many, the current focus of the United Nations on ending and resolving conflicts needs to be more than adequately balanced by its work on preventing conflicts. The preventive aspect can encompass a wide range of activities, including reading the early warning signs of tension or conflicts, responding to violent extremist trends, promoting participatory governance and development, investing in sound and inclusive institutions, and fostering a culture of peace and non-violence. Enhanced partnerships and synergies within the relevant regional arrangements or organizations should bring useful dividends.

The Charter-stipulated measures of mediation, conciliation and arbitration need to be mainstreamed through the entire process of conflict prevention and resolution, and not necessarily in the aftermath of conflicts. Meaningful and sustained efforts must be made to resolve protracted conflicts and humanitarian situations that tend to foment further resentment, intolerance and radicalization, including across borders and regions. The nexus between peace and security, development and human rights should form the basis for the work of the overall peace and security architecture of the United Nations.

These are responsibilities that may be shared by the principal organs of the United Nations, consistent with their respective mandates. A limited interpretation of the provisions concerned would only continue to limit the options for the Organization as a whole to deliver on its potentials when it comes to effectively preventing or resolving conflicts. The entire membership should work towards realizing those potentials.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations represent the core values of the Organization. As such, they have stood the test of time, as evidenced both by the successes and the failures of the United Nations over the past seven decades. When interpreted holistically and in good faith, they enable the international community to respond effectively to the ever-changing challenges to our international system.

They also serve as the primary benchmark for the Security Council as the guardian of international peace and security. In essence, this calls for an active, decisive Security Council, taking action when the circumstances so demand. In so doing, the Security

Council must place the people at the centre of its action, thereby reaffirming in the words of the Preamble of the Charter,

> "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small".

Certainly, as this and other debates have illustrated, the Council can and must do a better job at upholding this responsibility.

Today's conflicts are marked by widespread violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Many parties to conflict openly disrespect human dignity and the most fundamental rules of international humanitarian law, as evidenced in the recent attack on the Médecins Sans Frontières facilities in Syria. The vicious cycle of death and destruction in that country serves as one of the most striking examples of the dramatic erosion of respect for international humanitarian law. And it is human suffering that serves as a catalyst for ever greater threats to international peace and security, fostering radicalization, paving the way for terrorist groups, motivating foreign fighters and causing violence to spread far beyond the territory of Syria. We must ask ourselves: Would a decisive Security Council, placing the rights of human beings at the centre of its action, not have done more to end this man-made catastrophe?

Membership in the Council is a privilege that entails the responsibility to take action when confronted with mass atrocity crimes. The code of conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes is an expression of commitment that, when faced with such situations, Council member will get their priorities straight. It is a commitment that they will actively pursue appropriate Council action aimed at preventing or ending mass atrocity crimes, and that they will not stand in the way of credible attempts to do so. One hundred and ten Member States of the Organization, including the majority of the members of the Council, have signed on to the code. We welcome that commitment. We expect the code to be applied in practice, including on the basis of information provided by the Secretary-General. We also encourage all other States Members of the United Nations, especially Council members and those aspiring to become members, to join this initiative.

In that respect, we want to address the elected members of this Council. The elected members ran long campaigns and exerted great efforts to sit at this table. We are convinced that a way to a more decisive Council is through their taking greater ownership of the Council's work. We are pleased to see that in recent years elected members have been more proactive and eager to make a difference. They have our full support in that endeavour. At a time when differences among permanent members are growing, elected members' engagement and mediation efforts can help overcome political differences in the Council, promote compromise, improve transparency and foster the political will to take effective action.

Finally, complementary to a decisive Security Council, the International Criminal Court is central in holding accountable those who manifestly violate the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Among its very first purposes is "the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace. When a State wishes to suppress a behaviour, it can subject individuals to criminal penalties for that behaviour — that goes without saying. But since the Nuremberg trials, which took place 70 years ago, no international court has been able to hold individuals accountable for committing what has been called the supreme international crime — the crime of aggression. That will change in 2017 when the International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over the crime of aggression is activated. Twenty-six States have already ratified the Kampala Amendments to the Rome Statute on the crime of aggression. We encourage others to do the same, as the Amendments simply complement the prohibition of the illegal use of force, one of the key principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The effective criminalization of the illegal use of force will also be an additional tool available to the Council to effectively prevent armed conflict. We are all in a position to help contribute to that truly historic achievement.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Mminele (South Africa): We would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important and timely debate on the theme "Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security". We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing. The fact that this open debate comes in the year that marks the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations is highly significant.

South Africa wishes to place on record its firm continued commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, which remain as valid today as they were 70 years ago. We believe that the world is better off because of the United Nations than it would have been without this Organization. My delegation remains committed to fostering the development of its bilateral and multilateral relations on the basis of the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Since its establishment, the United Nations has registered remarkable accomplishments in fulfilling its mandate, including the role it played in the fight against apartheid and colonialism. The Charter of the United Nations is the single most important source of international law, and all Member States have the responsibility to uphold it.

The United Nations has also demonstrated that it can be adaptable to new global realities, if the necessary political will exists within its membership. We will all agree that today the United Nations is at a crossroads, requiring our renewed commitment and focus to guide the Organization into a new phase of its rich history. One area we have agreed to improve is the way in which we appoint the Organization's Secretary-General. Our joint commitment to make the process more democratic, inclusive and transparent has to date resulted in a much improved process.

Nevertheless, other areas remain in desperate need for change. The most important of which is the long-outstanding reform of the Security Council, which remains unrepresentative. The status quo is particularly discomforting because the Council is the principal organ tasked with the management of the core mandate of the United Nations, namely, the maintenance of international peace and security. Fundamentally, it is important to remember that, to achieve lasting peace, there is always a need to vigorously pursue collective security through preventive means first, rather than a reactive approach to conflict resolution.

In that regard the Council has been inconsistent and selective. The current state of play in the Middle East is a direct indictment of the Council, as over decades it has failed to adequately address the question of Palestine. The Security Council has even failed to enforce its own decisions — a failure replicated in Western Sahara. Furthermore, often when it does act, the Council's first response is to act under Chapter VII with coercive measures, ignoring the Charter's guidance and compulsion for the need to settle differences through peaceful means.

In Chapter VIII, the Charter recognizes that the efforts of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security can be improved by working in cooperation with other organizations. As emphasized at the 2005 World Summit, the Charter further recognizes the importance of forging predictable partnerships and cooperation arrangements between the United Nations and regional organizations aimed at addressing international peace and security challenges.

During its non-permanent membership of the Security Council, South Africa worked tirelessly to turn that decision into action, specifically as it relates to the African Union (AU). We believe that it has become essential to allow the AU to respond to conflicts in a proactive and rapid manner, with a view to limiting the escalation of conflict and human suffering. That applies especially in cases involving the United Nations because its processes translate into a longer response time, while the situation on the ground is getting out of hand.

In conclusion, the Charter underscores the importance of States Members of the United Nations working together in dealing with challenges to global peace and security. The Security Council should guard against the flouting of international law by Member States to serve their own self-interests. The principles of non-interference and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all Member States should remain protected by the Charter. South Africa believes that any intervention should be done in adherence with the Charter's principles and Articles and in the framework of international customary, humanitarian and human rights law.

I wish to stress that South Africa remains committed to honouring and respecting the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Monsignor Kassas (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to thank the Venezuelan presidency for bringing this issue to the attention of the Security Council in an open debate.

As extremist ideologies grow within political regimes, giving rise to terrorist groups and various

non-State actors, it is important that we look closely at the thoughts and ideas of the founding members of the United Nations as they were reeling from the devastation of two world wars in less than half a century. Their desire to save future generations from the scourge of war speaks to a moral and ethical value to be highly esteemed as one integral to human development.

When Pope Francis addressed the General Assembly, on 25 September 2015, he spoke of the means by which the hopes enshrined by the founding Members in the Charter would be realized or frustrated. He stated,

> "When the Charter of the United Nations is respected and implemented with transparency and sincerity and without ulterior motives, as an obligatory point of reference for justice and not as a tool for concealing false intentions, peace can result. On the other hand, when a standard is seen simply as an instrument to be used when it produces the right results and to be avoided when it does not, we open a real Pandora's box of uncontrollable forces that do serious harm to defenceless populations and to our cultural and biological environments." (*A/70/PV.3, p. 5*)

In his address to the General Assembly on 2 October 2015 (see A/70/PV.27), His Excellency Archbishop Paul Gallagher, Secretary of Relations with States of the Holy See, suggested four areas of reflection, two of which are especially relevant to the work of the Council, namely, the responsibility to protect and respect for international law. What is needed, as Archbishop Gallagher highlighted, is a genuine and transparent application of Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations, which established the principle of non-intervention, excluding all unilateral force against another Member of the United Nations and demanding full respect for lawfully constituted and recognized Governments. *Pacta sunt servanda* was what he said in that connection, and Article 2 of the Charter has definitively banned concepts such as preventive war under the pretext of a principle of security or interventions on the part of third-party States in favour of one side in a situation of civil conflict. Nevertheless, he added that Article 2 cannot be used as a pretext to excuse grave violations of human rights. Where such violations persist, and if further intervention is considered necessary, there is no other recourse than to implement the measures set forth in Chapters VI and VII of the Charter.

Hidden beneath the rhetoric against impunity for war crimes against civilians and the difficulties of providing humanitarian aid to those suffering is the harsh reality that the industrial complexes of the world are providing weapons and munitions, either for money or, perhaps, as gifts to their clientele. The arms trade must be suppressed. The proliferation of weapons has resulted in an increase in deaths and injuries, leading to waves of fleeing refugees, rather than to peace and stability. The indiscriminate killing of civilians is a heinous crime. As technological advances are applied to weaponry, we may, in the view of my delegation, know more about killing than we do about providing for the living. Have the words of the Charter to save future generations from the scourge of war been fulfilled? Each one of us in the Chamber knows, at the bottom of his or her heart, the answer to that question.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Observer of the Organization of American States.

Mr. Koncke (Organization of American States) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for the Organization of American States (OAS) to participate in this open debate today.

We are pleased to see that the presidency of Venezuela has completed a three-month cycle in which the presidency of the Security Council has been the responsibility of member States of the Organization of American States: the United States in December, Uruguay in January and Venezuela in February. We want to express our appreciation for the briefing made by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon this morning.

Before entering into the substance of my statement, my delegation wishes to inform you, Mr. President, that it will be sending a communication regarding the modalities for participation in the open debates of this body by regional organizations. As the regional organization that obtained permanent observer status to the United Nations before any other, on 16 October 1948 — with a membership of 35 States from the Caribbean, South America, Central America and North America and 70 observers, 9 of which make up the Security Council — the OAS deems it unfair that its participation in this type of debate should be contingent upon the intercession of one of its States parties. That is especially pertinent when that practice is not standardized for all regional organizations and not based on any public or published norm.

Although it has been in existence for over 70 years, the Charter of the United Nations continues to be the main normative common denominator for international society. The purposes and principles set out in Articles 1 and 2 of the Charter have protected humankind from the catastrophe of another world war, such as those wars that we lived through during the twentieth century, and we must pay lasting tribute to the drafters of the Charter for the work that they achieved. Nevertheless, the setbacks and failures of the international community to prevent crises, to calm violence, to end terrorism and extremism and to build bridges of dialogue have been and continue to be the cause of suffering and pain for millions of people on the planet.

Every failed attempt to prevent a conflict, to mitigate a humanitarian crisis, to bring parties in conflict closer together or to implement a principle has resulted in the death, suffering and poverty of men, women and children. The Secretariat General of the OAS believes that the recognized principles of sovereignty, non-intervention and domestic jurisdiction are fundamental and must be fully respected and reaffirmed, without entailing any detriment to the respect for human rights, the protection of civilians and the responsibilities of international society. It is incumbent on the United Nations, regional organizations and the States parties to work to resolve the apparent tension between the aforementioned principles and efforts to ensure international peace and security. In order for the work of the United Nations and regional organizations to have value, it must have a direct impact on people's lives, while improving the enjoyment of their rights and their quality of life. In that regard, the Charter of the United Nations recognizes the role of regional organizations and their contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security and conflict prevention.

In its inter-American scope, the work of the OAS is guided by the Charter of the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Similarly, the four fundamental pillars of the OAS constitute the set of principles that define its work and guide its actions, namely, democracy, human rights, integral development and multidimensional security. We believe that the best way to work for people in every type of situation of crisis, vulnerability and emergency lies in unconditional compliance with the those guiding principles, which, in turn, best prevents the repetition of past mistakes. With the purposes and principles as its guide, the OAS of today has acted in various scenarios and contexts in compliance with the legal instruments that underpin its existence.

Without being exhaustive, proof of that can be seen the recent special mission to Haiti, whose task, at the request of then President Martelly and with the consensual approval of the OAS Permanent Council, was to work together to achieve a Haitian-led constitutional and negotiated solution, allowing for the holding of the second round of elections in a timely manner. We welcome the agreement achieved between former President Martelly and the speakers of both legislative Chambers, as well as the recent appointment, in the framework of that agreement, of a transitional President, Jocelerme Privert. We expect that the second round of the presidential election will be held, as agreed, on 24 April, and the OAS reiterates its full support to the Haitian people, political actors and civil society in cooperating to support the holding that event.

Likewise, we want to mention the work of the OAS in Colombia, with its support mission to the peace process, which has been playing an important role, as recently reaffirmed by President Santos Calderón and OAS Secretary General Almagro. In the case of Honduras, the OAS has worked jointly with the Government, the opposition, the judiciary, social actors and the broadest range of participants to create a support mission to combat corruption and impunity in Honduras. Another action that could be mentioned is the mission in the Dominican Republic and Haiti in response to the migration crisis, which, along with the efforts of the Dominican Government, led to a reduction in the level of unrest and number of deportations.

In the case of Venezuela, and in compliance with the obligations and privileges arising from the Charter of the OAS and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, Secretary General Almagro Lemes has made assessments based on inalienable principles, both in the process leading to legislative elections on 6 December and in subsequent aspects of the installation of the new National Assembly. Again, in this case the OAS reaffirms its mission to contribute constructively to necessary dialogue and reiterates its readiness to collaborate at all potentially relevant levels of international cooperation.

The relevance of the topic of today's discussion on respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter

of the United Nations demonstrates the magnitude of the work ahead. In such efforts, the General Secretariat of the OAS understands that it must never lose sight of the interests of the weakest and most vulnerable, whose only shield is precisely the inalienable, indivisible and interdependent nature of human rights and the obligation of countries and international and regional organizations to ensure that those rights are protected.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Laassel (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, let me thank Venezuela for having convened today's debate and on its choice of the theme "Respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security". I take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing on the topic this morning.

I also take this opportunity to condemn in the strongest terms terrorism in all its forms. Last Friday, the Kidal camp of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali was the target of indiscriminate terrorism that claimed the lives of six peacekeepers and wounded approximately 30 others. At this painful time for the peacekeeping family, which includes Morocco, I offer my deepest condolences to the Secretary-General and to the families of the victims, and wish the injured a speedy recovery.

On 26 June 1945, the founders, eager to save succeeding generations from the scrouge of war, signed the Charter of the United Nations in San Francisco. The objective of that historic founding document is to maintain international peace and security, ensure development and promote human rights. Thus, the principles and purposes of the Charter were carefully developed to prevent a recurrence of past tragedies, restore dignity to humankind and establish the principle of equality among the States Members of the United Nations. Although the Charter of the United Nations has laid the foundation for a new global system, over the years the United Nations has adapted to the challenges facing the international community. Thus, each of the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, development and human rights — developed gradually to meet the needs of the international environment.

Human rights, which are featured in six Articles of the Charter, were the first main concern of an international community anxious not to relive the suffering of two world wars. That is why, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the first instrument to be adopted by the United Nations. The United Nations later developed a robust legal framework comprised of 18 conventions, covenants and protocols and over 30 declarations, covering the entire spectrum of rights and vulnerable groups. The United Nations has also set up a complete and comprehensive system of mechanisms to promote and protect human rights.

The development dimension reflected in six Articles of the Charter was also at the centre of United Nations action, on the basis of the principle that there is no peace without development and no development without peace. The new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations Development Programme are all elements that have brought the Organization closer to its Member States and help them set up sustainable development structures for their populations.

Peace and security, addressed in one-third of the Charter's Articles, has undergone significant changes, particularly in the approach used. Indeed, the United Nations, which had focused initially on decolonization issues in the 1950s and 1960s, has in recent decades become a body that promotes political solutions, mediation and dialogue for the peaceful resolution of conflicts, thereby working to maintain and consolidate peace. Leaving behind the traditional patterns of conflict management and investing more in conflict prevention and technical assistance in the areas of development and promotion of human rights, the United Nations has been able to adapt to new global security challenges that are increasingly complex and cross-border.

The Kingdom of Morocco supports the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those relating to the peaceful settlement of disputes, as outlined in Chapter VI, and strongly supports the ongoing role of the United Nations as a universal Organization responsible for resolving and deciding on matters relating to peacekeeping and international security, the promotion of human rights and sustainable development. The Kingdom fully supports efforts to promote reconciliation and dispute settlement, as evidenced by the mediation efforts of His Majesty King Mohammed VI in resolving the crisis in the Mano River region, our assistance to our Malian brothers in

overcoming their crisis, and our support for our Libyan brothers to help them get back on their feet.

At the request of the Secretary-General, a year ago His Majesty the King offered the Kingdom of Morocco as host to the inter-Libyan talks under the auspices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya. Those talks culminated with the signing of the Libyan Political Agreement in Skhirat on 17 December, and we welcome the formation of the National Reconciliation Government in Libya.

Moreover, in its tireless efforts to address the crises in our continent and elsewhere, the Kingdom of Morocco has been committed since 1960 to United Nations efforts to maintain international peace and security, including by participating in peacekeeping operations in Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, as well as in operations of the NATO and the European Union mandated by the Security Council. Moreover, during its three terms as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the last in 2012 and 2013, the Kingdom of Morocco has continued to uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter. Lastly, in the coming weeks the Kingdom of Morocco will host the Arab Summit, which we hope will be an opportunity to overcome the challenges facing the Arab world.

The principles of the Charter must be achieved through the adoption of a comprehensive and multidimensional approach that focuses on the rule of law in all aspects of international relations. That approach must be based on respect for human rights, democracy, electoral processes and democratic transitions, the rule of law and institutions of governance, which are all key elements established by the United Nations. Finally, domestic law, which allows States to comply with their international obligations, must not take precedence over international law.

The international community is called on to continue to adapt its approach and method. To that end, the United Nations must put human beings and their well-being at the centre of its action. United Nations action in the areas of humanitarian rights and human rights must be depoliticized. Obsolete ideologies must evolve and adapt to the realities of today's world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Panama.

Ms. Flores Herrera (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): First and foremost, I would like to welcome the presence this morning of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Her Excellency Ms. Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, and thank Venezuela for having convened today's debate on the maintenance of peace and security and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing on the topic.

There is no doubt that today, when we discuss the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) as a relevant theme on our common agenda that seeks to transform the world, we cannot ignore the fact that progress will be possible only if we guarantee a safe world without conflict. The maintenance of international peace and security, which is the Organization's main objective, is the Security Council's primary responsibility. The scope of the responsibility conferred to the Security Council by the 51 founder Members in 1946, including Panama, is relevant, and therefore the obligation to generate conditions for a lasting peace is unavoidable.

The United Nations cannot allow that armed conflicts continue taking human lives, that civilians, mainly women and children, should continue to be exposed to violent extremism and international terrorism or that humanitarian crises and forced displacements should persist. The current global situation, which is significantly different to that of 70 years ago, demands effective preventive action by the Security Council as guarantor of peace. It cannot focus only on armed intervention, the establishment of subsequent peace operations or when a situation is at breaking point. The purposes and principles of the Charter continue to be relevant; we cannot regard them as a norm only. Rather, we should regard them as a moral obligation that we States and this Organization have to humankind.

The adoption of effective collective measures to prevent and elimimate threats to peace, as well as the resolution of conflicts through peaceful means, is an obligation of the Security Council that demands actions, carried out in full responsibility and that must be guided without exception by those principles. A good example is the request made by the Colombian Government and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionaries de Colombia just a few days ago for the United Nations, through a draft resolution adopted by the Security Council, to establish a political mission as an international component

following the signing of agreements between the parties. We fully agree that it is very rare for a country that seeks the support of the Security Council and requests its help regarding a peace process.

Panama has been insisting on the need for a paradigm change, an ethical overhaul that the entity requires in order to humanize the agendas and the make actions of all United Nations forums more transparent, particularly the Security Council, where sadly the themes in question have faces and numbers that today are the populations of Syria, Palestine, Yemen and Burundi, among many others. We must understand that the need for just and appropriate action is not a matter for the Organization or to favour specific positions; rather it is a matter of favouring the 120 million people who are in need, the 60 million displaced people who right now, as we debate principles here in the Chamber, continue to wait for resolute action from the United Nations. As a current member of the Group of Friends on the Responsibility to Protect, Panama supports those who call for and demand the protection of human beings to prevent them becoming victims of mass atrocities. Such iniatives as Human Rights Up Front operationalize that call.

Panama promotes greater transparency within the working methods of the Security Council and greater democratization of its decision-making process so that it can respond to the founding principles of the Organization, which, I reiterate, are and will continue to be relevant. With a vision that human rights should prompt nations to ensure the existence of regional international peace and security, we are obliged to adhere to the United Nations Charter because so long ago, quite rightly, its founders correctly placed the human being at the centre of the debate. However, respecting the purposes and principles of the Charter is to strengthen the inspiration of those who achieved this purpose after a war, promoting respect for human beings, the nucleus of all societies, to achieve the desired firm and sustainable peace.

If it is true that, according to the classic concept of a State as the main subject of international law, it is intrinsically linked to the concept of sovereignty, which for judicial effects rest on two fundamental principles — the legal equality of States and non-intervention in internal affairs — principles that are enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Respect for human rights is aligned with international law. Human rights are the direct expression of human dignity of the human being, and the obligation to protect them derives from various internationally agreed instruments, including the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man. Not a single State can hide behind the principle of non-intervention to justify failure to meet obligations in the field of human rights, acquired pursuant to international law, both customary and conventional. Expressions of concern or disapproval with regard to any violations of human rights are legitimate in all circumstances and do not constitute intervention in the internal affairs of any State.

We face a year of global challenges that coincides with the selection of a new Secretary-General. We look forward to a selection process that sets positive precedents, not just because the particpation of women was promoted for the first time, but also because of the transparency of a process whose result will be the reflection of the higher interests and representation of the Organization as a whole.

I conclude by stressing the firm link that exists between development and security. There cannot be peace without development and, still less, development without peace, which is why consistency of action by the Organization in the light of the purposes and principles that its creation promoted is increasinly pressing.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ecuador.

Mr. Morejón Pazmiño (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to convey to you, Mr. President, how extremely satisfied we are to see Venezuela presiding over this meeting of the Security Council. We would also like to express a special welcome to Ms. Delcy Rodríguez Gómez, Minister for Foreign Affairs, on behalf of President Rafael Correa and Minister for Foreign Affairs Ricardo Patiño Aroca. We also wish to draw attention to the excellent work being undertaken by the presidency of Venezuela of the Council during the month of February, proof of which is the issue that we debating at today's meeting, which undoubtedly constitutes the fundamentai support of the international community. We welcome the proposal made by Venezuela that a document containing the statements made by representatives be circulated as an official document of both the Security Council and the General Assembly.

For all of those reasons, it could not be more timely nor more appropriate that we debate, as you, Sir, have proposed, the need to comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in order to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security, given that the various statements delivered here today ought to be taken as a contribution to efforts to ensure that the United Nations and the Security Council in particular be more transparent and democratic. My country believes that the correct application of the Charter of the United Nations is clearly the only way of ensuring international peace and security. The Charter proclaims them and the Member States must ensure the implementation of fundamental concepts such as respect for sovereignty, the equality of States, avoiding the use or threat of use of force, non-interference and the ongoing seach for the peaceful settlement of disputes. There can therefore be no pretext for the Security Council or any of its members being remiss and acting against the other purposes and principles set out in the Charter, such as the need to take collective and effective measures to prevent and eliminate threats to peace, non-aggression, the use of peaceful means in line with the principles of international law, self-determination and the need to promote international cooperation, among other things.

Some Member States of the Security Council tend to securitize issues of global importance. Bearing responsibility for issues in a body of the United Nations that is the only body that issues binding resolutions, apart from being inappropriate, is entirely undemocratic, given that it favours inequality. A group of 15 cannot overrule a group of 193. It is very important that the Security Council, when it make use of, and does not abuse, prerogatives under Chapter VII of the Charter also attach as much importance to what is set out in Chapters VI and VIII, in keeping with international law. Furthermore, the democratic deficit in international organizations that arose in the post-war period, and which make up the current international system in general, and the United Nations and the Security Council in particular, must be corrected in a definitive way, if we want the Organization to be able to respond appropriately to the purposes and principles that constitute its very foundation. We Member States are responsible for offering to the United Nations the type of leadership it needs and deserves in order to carry out its work in an effective way to make our world a better place, in particular for our future generations, as is set out in the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mrs. Nusseibeh (United Arab Emirates) : I thank you, Mr. President, for holding this timely debate, and we thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

In order to provide more focused remarks, I will confine the United Arab Emirates's comments to the Middle East region, where there is a profound perception that the United Nations is failing to implement its primary purposes as defined in Article 1 of the Charter. As we have already heard today, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and other violent extremist groups are responsible for despicable crimes throughout our region. There is no question that the primary responsibility for these crimes lies with the extremists.

Yet their emergence is also a consequence of the failure of national Governments and the international community — through the United Nations — to deal promptly and effectively, within the international legal framework, with these non-State actors and their backers. In large part, this is because the instruments available to the Security Council have not been able to adapt rapidly enough to correspond to the specific nature of the threat. What good are travel bans or asset freezes when the culprits evade official documentation such as passports and bank accounts?

This inability to check the rise of non-State extremist actors means they now constitute an existential threat to the entire Middle East as we know it, and specifically to the United Arab Emirates model of moderation, tolerance and respect for religious freedom. Increasingly, they also pose a global threat in the form of the tragic and violent attacks they have perpetrated worldwide. These threats will continue to grow and evolve, and the international community's response must keep pace or risk becoming ever more outdated and ineffective.

A further central cause of instability in our region is the rise in the rampant use of force against the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of States. To be clear, these detrimental acts are taken by State actors, and we note the growing cynicism at play — a divergence between what States claim to be in the international arena and what they actually do. We

therefore need a more robust response to State drivers of instability.

In one example, the United Arab Emirates like others welcomed the nuclear agreement reached with Iran last year. However, the hope that the nuclear agreement promised a more constructive role for Iran in the region failed to materialize, as demonstrated by the country's actions across the Middle East to date. Iranian forces continue to occupy three islands in the Arabian Gulf that are part of the United Arab Emirates, in contravention of Article 2 of the Charter. In accordance with its obligation to the peaceful settlement of disputes, the United Arab Emirates has been calling on Iran to resume bilateral negotiations, refer the matter to the International Court of Justice or submit to international arbitration. These calls have gone unheeded so far.

States throughout the region remain alarmed by the Iranian Constitution, which calls for the export of its revolution to other countries. The principles of the sovereign equality of Member States and of non-intervention as outlined in Article 2 of the Charter are continually violated by Iran's successive attempts at destabilization across the region. Their proxy militias are provocative, destabilizing and dangerous — yet they go unchallenged. We believe that Iran must make a serious commitment to joining the community of nations as an accountable member and to stopping its arming, funding and enabling of radical, violent and extremist entities. We see no censure of such actors at the United Nations.

In the United Arab Emirates's view, the legitimacy and effectiveness of the United Nations can be restored. Some recommendations for doing so include the following. First, we call for better implementation of, and greater efforts to hold States accountable for, their obligations under existing Security Council resolutions. In our region, examples include the failure to enforce resolution 2216 (2015) on Yemen or to implement numerous resolutions on humanitarian access in Syria, as well as the large number of resolutions calling for the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied Palestinian territories. If States fail to uphold these existing responsibilities, we must question what value further resolutions might have. The very credibility of the Security Council is at stake today.

Secondly, we welcome the Secretary-General's focus on prevention. The United Nations must expend more and better quality resources on prevention as a key instrument of peacekeeping, and on mediation, negotiation, arbitration and judicial settlement, as well as in support of Chapter VI interventions. Additionally, greater use by the Secretary-General of the prerogative under Article 99 of the Charter would be welcomed, not instead of Council engagement, but alongside it.

Thirdly, the Security Council must coordinate with regional organizations and affected States earlier and engage in transparent consultations, especially when the Council is considering taking action. Not only does Chapter VIII require the Security Council to encourage efforts undertaken by regional organizations towards the peaceful settlement of disputes, it is also in the strategic interests of the Security Council to do so. Regional States have the closest history and political background to the conflicts themselves, as well as the greatest interest in resolving them. In the face of intransigence and disunity in the Security Council, regional actors will be left no choice but to respond assertively to protect legitimate authority and continue to guarantee regional stability for their peoples.

Finally, the Security Council must apply a single standard to all actors, all States and all perpetrators of occupation, State terrorism and foreign interference. Efforts must be redoubled to strengthen accountability by sovereign States, protect those living in conflict and end injustice.

This is a watershed year for the United Nations. Nothing will reflect the intention of the Security Council to reengage with the Middle East more than its choice of candidate for the next Secretary-General. The United Arab Emirates, with many other States, hopes that the Council will take into account the views of the full membership as it approaches this decision.

I would like to conclude by wishing Venezuela continued success in its presidency of the Security Council this month.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Anshor (Indonesia): My delegation extends its appreciation to the Venezuelan presidency for convening this Security Council open debate on an issue of high importance in the ongoing evolution of the role and function of the United Nations in accordance with the principles and purposes contained in its Charter.

Indonesia remains convinced that just as this issue was highly pertinent in the past, so it is in the present and so it will be in the future, in the context of achieving international peace, security and prosperity. Furthermore, Indonesia reaffirms the validity of the principles and purposes of the Charter, which should remain key elements for maintaining international peace and security. Yet Indonesia also agrees that the Organization must undertake new or strengthened multilateral approaches to implement these principles and purposes, should it wish to remain relevant and competent in addressing the multifaceted challenges that exist today and will likely exist in the future. We therefore support approaches that would reinforce the ability of the United Nations to deal effectively with challenges in the fields of international peace, security and development. In this regard, my delegation would like to highlight the following.

First, the imperative to modernize the Organization, in particular the Security Council, to reflect today's reality and plurality is obvious. Reforming the Council's structure and the way it fulfils its mandates and responsibilities is key in this regard. Observing democratic principles and taking into account the value of inclusiveness and transparence are highly relevant to improving the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council's work. There should be a new responsibility-sharing arrangement among States, in particular by giving emerging powers a greater role commensurate with their respective capacities and competencies in contributing to regional and global peace and security. In this regard, Indonesia remains supportive of the intergovernmental negotiations process and believes that incremental progress should be pursued to reform the Security Council.

Secondly, the Security Council must be bold and innovative in addressing persistent situations of concern, in particular protracted conflicts. There should be a mechanism to deal with problems stemming from lack of unity among Security Council members, especially among the permanent five, which until now has prevented the Council from taking any action.

Thirdly, an arrangement should be developed to ensure that the Security Council works in a harmonious and productive manner with the General Assembly and other main organs while respecting the various strengths and mandates of each one. Sustainable peace and security can only be created and nurtured through an integrated approach to the three United Nations pillars, namely, peace and security, development, and respect for human rights and the rule of law. Respect for the rule of law at the national and international levels is essential to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Fourthly, in the framework of efforts to strengthen peace and security, greater attention and more resources must be invested in conflict prevention. Hence conflict prevention, which also entails pinpointing early warning, should be a priority. In this process, the Security Council must leverage the strength of other relevant organs. While we support the Council's resolve to address imminent and ongoing conflicts, a greater mandate should be given to the Economic and Social Council to address issues pertaining to the root causes of conflicts. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) provides a pertinent framework in this regard. Furthermore, the Council should contribute to the strengthening and the effective use of all available means for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Finally, in the context of international peace and security, the threat posed by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction must also be addressed effectively. For as long as these fatal weapons exist as part of the defence doctrines of some, the danger and threat to humanity will remain. Thus, it is vital for the United Nations to reach a multilaterally agreed decision aimed at redoubling efforts to accelerate the work of the multilateral disarmament machinery, in particular to achieve complete nuclear disarmament. Building on our collective commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter, we can and must together build a world that is peaceful, stable and prosperous for everyone. Indonesia, on its part, is determined to continue playing its role actively to help realize such a world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Plasai (Thailand): Let me begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for having convened this debate and for the comprehensive concept note for today's discussion (S/2016/103, annex). I also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

The maintenance of international peace and security is indeed one of the main purposes of the United Nations, as stipulated in Article 1 of its Charter. This purpose is first and foremost inseparable from the

other three purposes mentioned in the same Article. In our view, therefore, the maintenance of international peace and security must go hand in hand with the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples, the achievement of international cooperation in solving international problems and the harmonization of the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends.

In realizing these purposes, Member States must strictly abide by international law, in particular those principles of law enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Let me highlight four of these basic principles of law that from Thailand's perspective are key elements of the maintenance of peace and security in this modern world.

First, one cannot attach enough importance to the principle of the sovereign equality of all United Nations Members. It is truly sad that 70 years after the establishment of the United Nations, we are still witness to several conflicts around the globe where the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States have been disrespected, undermined and violated.

Secondly, the Kingdom of Thailand strongly believes that peace and security are best maintained through peaceful means, in particular through conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy and the pacific settlement of disputes. The provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter rightly reflect this principle, as they encompass a whole spectrum of measures aiming to prevent and deter actions that may disturb peace or pose a threat to security, and to settle any dispute that might arise therefrom. The recent successful negotiation on Iran's nuclear programme and the normalization of bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba are good examples of the effective use of measures under Chapter VI in contemporary world affairs.

Thirdly, the principle of refraining from the threat or use of force against other States' territorial integrity or political independence is today more relevant than ever. Since the signing of the United Nations Charter, the use of force by any party has been illegal unless undertaken in accordance with the Charter's provisions. It is the duty of all of us to ensure full observance of this principle.

The fourth principle is non-interference in any other State's domestic affairs. We believe that a State has primary responsibility for its own domestic matters. The non-interference principle is of fundamental importance, and no party may intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State in a manner inconsistent with international law, including the United Nations Charter and the many regional organization agreements that recognize this fundamental principle. In this regard, we urge the United Nations to enhance cooperation with regional organizations, which by nature are more informed about events in their area, in order to effectively maintain international peace and security in a sustained and inclusive manner.

The Security Council, as a key United Nations body for the maintenance of international peace and security, has a crucial role to play. It is the only body that can authorize action under Chapter VII. It is important for the credibility of the Organization that the Security Council work in strict compliance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Chapter VII is not an end in itself; it needs full and robust implementation by all parties concerned.

The purposes and principles of the Charter were set in the aftermath of the deadliest conflict that mankind had ever known to prevent the recurrence of such a situation for future generations. Between peace and war, the Kingdom Thailand has made its choice. We reaffirm our strong commitment to respect these purposes and principles as well as to do our utmost, together with the United Nations and its Member States, to build and maintain international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Poland.

Mr. Radomski (Poland): Poland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. We would like to offer some additional remarks from our national perspective.

First of all, I would like to thank Venezuela for convening today's open debate. The seventieth anniversary of the United Nations provided numerous opportunities to look at the history of our Organization. The importance of respecting the United Nations Charter was emphasized on many occasions. As the Security Council has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, which was conferred on it by the States Members of the United Nations, it is very appropriate to place this topic on the Council's agenda.

The principles established by the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for State sovereignty and territorial integrity, the peaceful settlement of international disputes and non-interference in other countries' internal affairs, make up the foundations of contemporary international law and international relations. These principles should be fully respected by all States. Any attempt to deviate from or deny them would only result in threats to international peace and security.

In this regard, we would like to underline once again what was already said today by the representative of the European Union: that the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine, our neighbour, must be fully respected, as reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/262, of March 2014.

According to the United Nations Charter, international disputes among countries should be resolved in a peaceful way. The Security Council should advocate peaceful solutions to disputes and support, as a matter of priority, efforts to resolve disputes through dialogue, negotiations, reconciliation, good offices and other peaceful means. The role of regional organizations and local actors is key in this context given the complex nature of today's conflicts and the limited resources of the United Nations. As proved by last year's agreement with Iran, such an approach is not that of a dreamer but can bring concrete benefits to the international community.

As we reflect today on the application of the principles of the United Nations Charter, it is important to stress that there are significant new threats and challenges to international peace and security that were unknown to or underestimated by the founders of the United Nations in 1945.

Terrorism and foreign fighters, violent extremism, cyberattacks and uncontrolled migration, climate change, information warfare, as well as transnational organized crime have all undermined global stability. While the Security Council strives to address these challenges, we need more consistency to ensure the successful completion of the tasks that arise from the Council's effort to maintain international peace and security. In that regard, we welcome the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism presented by the Secretary-General. It is important to bear in mind that the scourge of violent extremism is not exclusive to any religion or nationality.

Let me conclude by reaffirming that Poland, as one of the original Members of the United Nations, is fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that these norms provide a firm foundation for the universal application of international law to all countries and the advance of the international rule of law. All countries are equal members of the international community, and all countries are entitled to participate in international affairs on equal footing. Respect for democracy, human rights and the rule of law in international relations is as important as it is on a national level. It enhances trust and faith among participants of international life.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Maldives.

Mr. Sareer (Maldives): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on its accession to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February, as well as for convening this timely debate on the respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations as a key element for the maintenance of international peace and security.

From the ashes of the Second World War, the Charter of the United Nations birthed a new vision and hope for the global community; a promise for humankind to rise above the devastation and despair of the past. Though in our seventieth year, we find time and time again that we, the nations of the world, have collectively failed to fulfil that promise. The scourge of war rages on — maybe not between nations on the scales we have seen before, but within and between States in terms of proxy wars, in the actions of non-State actors, in massive humanitarian crises, and in our failure to protect the Earth, its peoples and its resources for future generations.

At its most basic level, the Charter is meant to guarantee sovereignty, the equality of States, non-interference, the peaceful settlement of disputes and fundamental respect among the nations of the world. Enshrined in its Preamble is the assurance that it will protect the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small. But at the very heart of the Charter of the United Nations, its spirit cries out for justice and dignity, not just between Member States but between all peoples — justice embodied in the opportunity for economic prosperity; justice in the establishment of social equity; justice as is necessary

for the establishment of a peaceful and inclusive society based on the rule of law. Its spirit calls out for a life of dignity for all the world's peoples.

As we walk these hallowed halls, we should remember that the diplomats, the international civil servants, the passionate few who have strived to make the world better have, over 70 years, had milestone successes. Today, the United Nations feeds over 104 million people in 80 countries, in war zones, natural disasters and in health emergencies. Everyday, the United Nations helps 17 million asylum seekers and refugees. Despite these achievements, the key purposes and principles, as enshrined in the Charter, are not always respected and adhered to by Member States These failures weigh upon our global conscience: five years of inaction in Syria; half a century of failure in Palestine; and a late-come awakening to our responsibilities towards future generations.

That our greatest failures are concentrated in the Middle East highlights the priorities, or lack thereof, that have consumed the Organization, and especially the Council. Our world views must expand in order to produce real results for those who are most vulnerable and most in need. The humanitarian consequences of these conflicts are beyond belief, and the hollow promises we have made scream our collective shame. For instance, a recent report published by the Syrian Centre for Policy Research found that, since March 2011, 11.5 per cent of the Syrian population had either been killed or injured, with the number of casualties amounting to 470,000. Furthermore, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has now registered more than 3 million Syrian refugees and, as of July 2015, there were at least 7.6 million internally displaced people within Syria alone.

In fact, clocking in at 60 million refugees and displaced people worldwide, there are more refugees in the world today than existed following the Second World War. Though the United Nations was founded with the goal of addressing such travesties, in that area the situation has worsened. And yet, if there is more glaring an example of our collective failure, it is the emerging threat posed by the existence of Da'esh, the so-called Islamic State, which represents a clear threat to international peace and security.

According to the report of the Secretary-General for the World Humanitarian Summit, entitled *One Humanity, Shared Responsibility*" between the late 1990s and early 2000s the number of civil wars declined, before increasing from 4 in 2007 to 11 in 2014. The report states that one-third of today's civil wars involve external actors. Consequently, these wars have become more deadly and prolonged.

Da'esh is not merely the consequence of conflict, but instead, is the product of the hatred that has consumed the region for decades. Violence is the result of that hatred, fostered by a fear that is consecrated by fundamental injustices between peoples. Though its manifestation is ever evident in the atrocities Da'esh commits across the globe, nowhere are these injustices more prominent than in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The occupied territories have formalized a system of apartheid that is inherently unjust and that fosters fear among both Palestinians and Israelis alike. That situation has institutionalized hate, creating a cyclical, self-sustaining system that feeds upon itself and ensures a vision for the region that consumes all that is light, good and hopeful.

And yet, those of us who are most committed to progress and prosperity, find some solace in the incremental steps the Organization has taken in other areas envisioned by the spirit of the Charter. In 2007, the Security Council held a high-level debate on the relationship between energy, security and climate (see S/PV.5663). It was the first time the Council addressed the potential impact of climate change on security. In 2009, the General Assembly held a debate on climate change and its possible security implications (see A/63/PV.85), later adopting resolution 63/281, inviting the relevant organs of the United Nations to intensify their efforts in considering and addressing climate change. In 2015, the Council held an open debate on the peace and security challenges facing small island developing States (see S/PV.7499), of which none is greater than the challenges posed by the effects of climate change. Although the Maldives has been beating that drum since 1987, it has taken almost three decades for the Organization to hear the wake-up call.

Our collective late-awakening to the dangers posed by climate change and the need to protect our world and its resources for future generations has not come too late. In the Paris Agreement, we have taken a bold step forward, but the threats posed to our food security, water security and, ultimately, our territory and even our sovereignty need greater and more serious attention.

Similarly, just a few months ago, we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) and the Sustainable Development Goals. It is hoped that the 2030 Agenda, in its holistic approach to development, will provide foundations for peaceful, just and inclusive societies, for it is only with peace that there can be development and only development that brings lasting peace. The promise that these recent developments make to leave no one behind gives us hope for peace and security, as envisioned in the true spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, as we enter this new era of global development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Laro (Nigeria): Nigeria thanks the delegation of Venezuela for organizing this debate and for the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) provided to guide our deliberations. We also thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

The purposes and principles of the United Nations are the foundations upon which the Organization stands. They define the parametres of multilateral engagement by United Nations Member States and provide a framework for achieving global peace, security, stability and prosperity for all. We welcome the opportunity that this debate provides us to reflect on the importance of respecting, at all times and without qualification, the principles and purposes of the United Nations, as defined in the Charter.

The Charter of the United Nations, over the decades, has stood the test of time. It is as relevant today as it was more than 70 years ago when it was adopted. Its pre-eminence as an international treaty is reinforced by its Article 103, which places the obligations of Member States under the Charter over and above their obligations under any other international treaty. What this implies is that Member States must at all times act in accordance with the Charter, and especially the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Chapters VI, VII and VIII of the Charter define very clearly the means by which the United Nations, Member States and regional organizations can promote international peace and security. Chapter VI calls for the peaceful settlement of disputes that are likely to threaten international peace and security. This provision of the Charter was the basis upon which Nigeria and Cameroon peacefully resolved their territorial dispute in the Bakassi peninsula. This and other actions that Nigeria has taken in the interest of international peace and security, particularly at the regional level in West Africa, demonstrate our commitment to respect the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We encourage Member States having disputes to resolve such disputes in the spirit of the Charter.

The drafters of the Charter of the United Nations displayed profound foresight with the inclusion of Chapter VIII, which recognizes the role of regional agencies in the maintenance of international peace and security. While the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security lies with the Security Council, regional organizations have played and continue to play an important role in addressing threats to peace, especially at the regional level.

In West Africa, the Economic Community of West African States has made significant achievements in resolving conflicts and maintaining peace. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development has played a key role in the maintenance of peace and security in East Africa. The Southern African Development Community has also been effective in maintaining peace in its sphere of influence. The Lake Chad Basin Commission member States and Benin are working together to defeat the Boko Haram terrorist group. The United Nations is working closely with the African Union in a win-win partnership that promotes peace and security in Africa. All these examples point to the relevance of regional arrangements in the global security architecture.

Contemporary international relations are growing in complexity with multiple overlapping dimensions. This sometimes leads to friction among States. Against that backdrop, the way to minimize threats to international peace and security is for all States to conduct their international affairs at all times in a manner that is consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Cyprus.

Mr. Menelaou (Cyprus): Cyprus aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union, and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

We would like to thank the Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council for giving Member States

the opportunity to exchange views on the Charter of the United Nations 70 years after the Organization's foundation. Cyprus attaches the utmost importance to the Charter of the United Nations and considers it to be the cornerstone of international law.

In the concept paper (S/2016/103, annex), the Council presidency recalls some of the significant achievements of the Organization, most notably regarding the promotion of human rights, decolonization and economic and social development. It also stresses, however, that at certain times the United Nations has failed to live up to the expectations of the world's peoples. We fully share that assessment, based on my country's experience. Previous speakers have referred to several examples of violations of the Charter of the United Nations in today's world. I will therefore take this opportunity to briefly reflect on the case of Cyprus, which is among the oldest issues on this organ's agenda.

Cyprus joined the United Nations immediately after gaining its independence from British colonial rule in 1960. It has since remained a steadfast supporter of the Organization and of the international legal framework it provides, despite having witnessed first-hand, from the standpoint of the victim, several violations of the Charter involving international peace and security and regarding its sovereignty and the non-use of force. There are several Security Council and General Assembly resolutions validating those violations. Notwithstanding the numerous resolutions and repeated efforts to resolve the Cyprus question over the years, the situation has remained unchanged since 1974, with 37 per cent of the island's territory still under foreign occupation by Turkey.

We acknowledge the need to look to the future. In that regard, we remain cautiously optimistic that the current negotiation process under the auspices of the good offices mission of the Secretary-General will finally lead to a successful outcome on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolutions and in line with the principles of the European Union, of which Cyprus is a member. If that successful outcome is to materialize, however, all parties involved, in particular those that constitute the source of the problem, need to acknowledge and assume their responsibilities and refrain from actions that constitute further violations of international law. They must realize that unproductive insistence on colonial era attitudes has no place in today's world.

The Charter of the United Nations calls, inter alia, for saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, reaffirming fundamental human rights, justice and respect for international law, promoting better standards of living and living together in peace. Those principles should serve as our torch everywhere in the world where problems continue to exist.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Khiari (Tunisia): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your initiative to convene today's important and thought-provoking open debate on respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. I thank you for putting this issue before the Council, which has been greatly debated and discussed within and outside of the United Nations. My delegation appreciates your insights into the theme, as reflected in the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) circulated earlier.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and for his vision on the topic.

Last year's debate on the Charter of the United Nations (see S/PV.7389) and today's meeting testify to our strong commitment to the Charter and its continued relevance, 70 years after its creation. They also represent an opportunity to reaffirm and reiterate our attachment to the principles and purposes embodied in the Charter and our commitment to multilateralism and to the spirit and requirements of contemporary international governance. Since its inception, the United Nations has proved to be a cornerstone of the international peace and security architecture. While we live in a totally different world from the one prevailing in the aftermath of the Second World War, when the United Nations came into being, the principles and objectives enshrined in the Charter remain unchanged.

Tunisia has always called for those principles to be accepted as the cornerstone of relations between nations, and we have built and shaped our foreign policy on those parameters. We are witnessing drastic changes in the international environment and in the nature of international challenges, in the scope of regional rivalries and internal conflicts. The increasing threats to international peace and security posed by the new global challenges on our agenda, including the proliferation of terrorist and violent extremist groups, require us not only to strengthen our concerted efforts to address them but also to launch a global

drive to reaffirm the crucial role that the principles of the Charter play in enabling us to preserve peace and stability and tackle any threat that could jeopardize that peace and our society and humanity.

Today there is an ever-stronger need for enhanced international cooperation in an ever-more integrated world, if we are to avoid the eruption of conflicts through strategies that ensure the peaceful settlement of disputes. My country strongly supports ensuring that the Security Council makes use of the tools available to it under Chapter VI of the Charter and turns to the type of coercive measures covered in Chapter VII only as a last resort. We regret the fact, however, that such tools have not been applied to issues such as the question of Palestine, which remains unresolved, owing to a lack of will and determination on the part of the Security Council and to its paralysis when it comes to putting an end to the oldest colonial rule in the world.

There is an urgent need to devise a more inclusive form of global governance if we are to adapt to evolving global dynamics, and that implies that our decision-making bodies must reflect the world's new realities. The Security Council is a case in point. We believe that reforming the Council can help to strengthen international law as a prerequisite for peace, security and development, and that it will further consolidate the Council's position as a central component of effective global governance capable of promoting concerted efforts to address today's challenges.

Our collective efforts to maintain international peace and security demand that we enhance strategic partnerships, particularly in the areas of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, with regional organizations such as the African Union, based on innovative interpretations of the relevant provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter. The African Union is playing an ever greater role, and a costly one, in the peaceful settlement of crises and conflicts in Africa, and we should strengthen our support to it.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia.

Mr. Mažeiks (Latvia): I would like to thank the Venezuelan presidency of the Security Council for organizing today's open debate on respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. I also thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Latvia aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union.

During this seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, we have reflected thoroughly on lessons learned and on the future of our Organization. Today's debate gives us an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of the foundational treaty of the United Nation, its Charter, and our respect for its purposes and principles. The Charter was adopted as a firm response to the suffering we endured during the Second World War. Through its signing in San Francisco in 1945, Member States committed to creating a better world for future generations, and first and foremost to maintaining international peace and security by establishing core principles for the international system that had largely been missing previously.

The United Nations has not always been able to prevent conflicts or stop atrocities. Today we are again living in troubled times, and the ideals and principles of the Charter are threatened in many ways around the globe. The ongoing conflicts and violence in many parts of the world have forced millions to flee their homes, more than at any time since the end of the Second World War. Violent extremism is on the rise, with terrorist groups such as Da'esh displaying new levels of brutality. The continued subjection of peoples to atrocity crimes is a stark reminder of the urgent need for the international community to prevent and respond to such horrors. Human suffering related to conflict must not become a new normal. As the world's only truly universal organization, the United Nations has a responsibility to live up to its task to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war

The Security Council, as the main guarantor of international peace and security, has a particular responsibility to prevent and stop mass atrocities. In the case of Syria, it has been unable to prevent the State from committing crimes against its own population. Latvia hopes that the renewed sense of responsibility in the Council for reaching a political solution to a conflict that has gone on far too long, as demonstrated by resolution 2254 (2015), will have tangible results, and we would like to express our support for the continued efforts of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria.

In this twenty-first century, one of the most important principles of the Charter — that of refraining from the use of force against the territorial integrity of

a sovereign State — has been breached by a permanent member of the Security Council even as the global community has kept reiterating how important it is to restore international legality. Latvia deplores any violation of our rule-based international system through the use of force and the annexation of part of another country. The principles of the Charter apply to all States Members of the United Nations, because we are all guardians of the international system and the Charter. We strongly support Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence, as well as its chosen path of democratic reform.

In conclusion, I would like to address the importance of conflict prevention and early action by the United Nations in situations of concern. Latvia strongly believes that respect for human rights, the rule of law and good governance is key to maintaining peace and security, and that therefore it is important to act early and effectively when serious human rights violations take place. We are pleased to see growing support for initiatives aimed at improving the Security Council's response to mass atrocities. Latvia supports the code of conduct proposed by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group for all Security Council members that asks them not to vote against actions designed to end or prevent mass atrocity crimes. We also support the French proposal to voluntarily refrain from the use of the veto in situations involving such crimes. We urge the permanent members of the Security Council to use their special privilege, the veto power, only in the interests of international peace and security.

We all have an obligation to work to overcome today's grim challenges and make the world a better place. Seventy years on, the Charter of the United Nations gives us a solid basis for the road ahead.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative in convening this open debate on respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. My delegation is also grateful for the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) that has been prepared to assist our discussions today.

Peru would like to affirm its solemn commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to an international order based on the rule of law, which are indispensable tools for creating a more peaceful, prosperous and fair world. There can be no doubt that the establishment of the United Nations has contributed greatly to the maintenance of international peace and security, and that thanks to the work of the Security Council, we have not slid back into war on a global scale, as was the case during the first half of the twentieth century.

Despite those achievements, however, my delegation recognizes that in some instances the Council has not effectively fulfilled its role in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that regard, I would like to briefly discuss the importance of continuing to work to achieve comprehensive reform of the Security Council, particularly with regard to its methods of work and specifically the use of the veto. That is becoming increasingly relevant in view of our imperative need to prevent atrocity crimes. The fact is, at times when a State has been unable to fulfil its sovereign responsibility to protect its people, we have seen situations in which the international community has not known how to respond effectively and in which the Security Council has been unable to fulfil its primary responsibility. In that regard, I would like to reiterate that the Government of Peru believes that the responsibility to protect was not conceived to undermine, but rather to strengthen, the sovereignty of States and the principle of sovereign equality enshrined in the San Francisco Charter.

My delegation also believes that it is necessary to limit the the unrestricted use of the veto by the permanent members of the Security Council where it may impede this organ from taking action on situations that may involve war crimes and mass atrocities. Peru therefore joined the political declaration sponsored by France and Mexico to restrict the use of the veto. We also endorse the code of conduct promoted by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, of which we are a member. On the other hand, we call for the Security Council to make a special effort to shift its approach from reacting to conflicts to preventing them.

My country believes that strict adherence to international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations is essential for the maintenance of international peace and security. We underscore the importance we place in the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. In that regard, we believe that the establishment of a judicial body with consultative competence, such as the International

Court of Justice, is a reflection of the importance that the Charter attaches to the promotion of the rule of law at the international level. As a such, by way of its decisions and advisory opinions, the International Court of Justice contributes to the promotion and clarification of international law as a genuine option for preserving peace.

Although Peru acknowledges the primary role of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security, we also believe it is essential that this organ utilize all the available tools provided for under Chapter VIII, concerning cooperation with regional and subregional organizations. Similarly, Peru believes that Security Council actions authorized in Chapter VII of the Charter should be adopted only after the Council has implemented non-coercive measures. In that connection, Peru reiterates its support for certain sanctions regimes established by the Council, although we believe that the working methods of the committees charged with the application of sanctions should be improved with a view to making sanctions regimes more effective.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize Peru's commitment to the building of peaceful and inclusive societies at the domestic and international levels, to which the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) will make a contribution. My country will continue to be a partner in the building of an international community that promotes the participation of all States without discrimination and in which international relations are based on mutual respect, good faith, cooperation, respect for the rule of international law and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Forging such an international community is the best guarantee for maintaining international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Samvelian (Armenia): I thank you, Mr. President, for the choice of the theme for the present debate. The full text of our statement will be shared accordingly.

The history of humankind has indeed been marked by conflicts, conquests and wars for the control of areas of influence, as the concept note (S/2016/103, annex) points out. However, the same history is replete with examples of the continued struggle of oppressed peoples for their freedom, self-determination and independence. The Charter of the United Nations was written by the people and for the people. The doctrine of the Charter is based on a reaffirmation of the faith in basic human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human individual. The Charter bases the development of friendly relations among nations on respect for the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples. It is precisely due to those fundamental principles of the Charter that 193 States, free nations, are gathered under the roof of the United Nations.

The Charter does not in any way limit the privilege of freedom to any people. It would be utterly unfair to downplay the many achievements of the Organization in promoting peace and security during the past 70 years. However, we should also admit that there has been an erosion of trust in the world order, given the proliferation and intensity of conflicts. Negotiations on peace agreements often confront fundamental difficulties, not least because the voices of the affected people are drowned in the justification and abuse of the principles of sovereignty, non-interference and territorial integrity.

Sovereignty entails responsibility. Therefore, when sovereignty harbours a political culture of repression, systematic violation of human rights and disregard for the rule of law, it effectively cultivates conflict. When a sovereign leader drives the discourse of intolerance and hatred, he flouts the responsibility of sovereignty. It is therefore as much about the responsibility of Government as it is about sovereignty.

The people of Nagorno Karabakh have effectively won their right to self-determination and freedom out of a struggle against decades of discrimination — historical as well as socioeconomic and political injustice. The continued cultivation of hatred and aggression against the people of Nagorno Karabakh, the entrenched culture of systematic violations of human rights in Azerbaijan, their continued war-mongering and effective refusal to achieve a swift and negotiated peace agreement mediated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group co-Chairs represent an actual physical threat to the people of Nagorno Karabakh. The consolidated support of the international community to the negotiating process within the agreed format is of the utmost importance, particularly in order to deny the unwilling party the privilege of procrastination, deviation from agreed principles of the settlement and forum-shopping. Once again, Armenia highly values the support by the

international community and the United Nations, and of the Secretary-General in particular, rendered to the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmanship in the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

Over the years, the broad concept of prevention has been gradually and effectively taking centre stage in the function of the maintenance of international peace and security. The responsibility of States to build peaceful and effective societies is a primary guarantee against conflicts. The evolving agenda of the United Nations, notably the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) recognizes in no ambiguous terms the interlinkages among peace, security, development, human rights, responsible Government and the rule of law. Enhanced international cooperation to that end is therefore compelling, not least when viewed strictly through the prism of the maintenance of international peace.

The requirement of systematic and careful analyses of information to detect deteriorating situations requires the sustainability of strengthened and reliable data sources. The United Nations system, with its multiple reporting mechanisms and extensive field presence, is one such important source. Enhanced cooperation with regional organizations also serves the purpose of expanding data-gathering. Sources of information are multiple. However, the affected people whose actual physical security is at risk are the ultimate voice in analysing situations. The Secretary-General makes a cogent argument in his report entitled *One Humanity, Shared Responsibility*, in that people want to be safe and free from violence, persecution, oppression and fear. They want to be treated with dignity and to know that their lives matter. Indeed, that is the central tenet of the Charter. It should also be central to the international order.

The capacity to channel early signs of deteriorating situations into the United Nations system, not least to the Security Council, remains a vital objective. In that respect, we commend the Secretary-General and the United Nations system for their continued efforts. We recall that one such important tool in that respect is the Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes.

Finally, swift action on early signs, however, remains a challenge, as it concerns heightened sensitivities to preventive engagement and compatibility of political will among Member States. It should also be noted that deteriorating situations are further exacerbated against a background of the deterioration in the international political context, in which major international and regional actors expand the scope of disagreements among them, and to which smaller States are particularly vulnerable.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guyana.

Mr. Talbot (Guyana): Guyana greets you, Mr. President, as a neighbour and congratulates Venezuela on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. We thank you for convening this open debate and for the theme, which calls our attention, in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security, to the importance of respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations — respect too often observed in the breach, despite many professions to the contrary. We also thank the Secretary-General for his insightful briefing this morning.

For us, as a small developing State, the current theme permeates our very existence, both as the cradle of our foreign policy and the standard which we expect others to observe in their conduct towards us. The enduring relevance and validity of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations cannot be overstated. They point to the continuing need for collective effort and multilateral action in maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, achieving international cooperation and solving global problems, and to the role of the United Nations in harmonizing our several options to those ends.

Respect for sovereign equality, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means, refraining from the threat or use of force in international relations, non-interference in the affairs of other States and fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States under the Charter are among the cardinal underpinnings of today's international order. They afford to all States, in particular the small and vulnerable, the prospect of protection in the face of a diverse array of threats of increasing complexity, including climate change, the vagaries of transnational criminal networks, the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons and drugs, the spread of disease and the scourge of terrorism.

The faithful adherence of all to the purposes and principles of the Charter is essential to effectively

promoting peace and security, sustainable development and human rights in our world. It is incumbent on the Council, charged with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and by extension its members, to be exemplary in such adherence and to eschew conduct inimical to the pursuit of that mandate, thereby providing a basis for enduring confidence in the efficacy and legitimacy of the actions of the Council in the eyes of the global community. But no member of the international community is exempt from the imperative of similar adherence. The Council and all Member States should be held accountable for compliance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.

We live in a global society that increasingly charges us to be our brothers' and sisters' keeper. To maintain peace, we must ensure that development is sustained and human rights are respected, so it behooves to ensure that peace endures in our societies and that we not allow discord and violence to spill over into other societies. In those interlinked pursuits, the organs of the United Nations —the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council in particular — must work in cooperation and complementarity, as should Member States. We should not discount the important role that the Secretary-General can play in upholding respect for the values of the Organization through the exercise of his good offices.

We would do well to be constantly mindful that the Charter is but a framework of values to be actualized by the actions countries take or decline to take in relation to it. It is the cornerstone of the rule of international law, the promotion of which is integral to the promotion of respect for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, the International Court of Justice, set up as one of the pillars of the international system in 1945, has a significant role to play in contributing to ensuring respect for the Charter's precepts, affording recourse to the peaceful settlement of disputes and controversies where they exist and facilitating the peace of the civilized.

Similarly, on the foundations of the regulatory framework of the Charter the world has built monumental legal frameworks as complementary instruments that further codify the rights and responsibilities of States, in keeping with Charter principles. One such framework, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea — the so-called constitution of the oceans — is one of the great achievements of the United Nations and is subscribed to by the vast majority of the world's nations. The Convention, including the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea established thereunder, has made and continues to make an important contribution to international cooperation, dispute resolution and peace. In that connection, Guyana also calls attention to the importance of respect for the sanctity of treaties, without which the world falls apart.

In conclusion, my country, as one of the smallest countries of our hemisphere, looks to the United Nations for protection from all who would do us harm or in any way threaten the sovereignty and territorial integrity with which we have been endowed. The Charter is not only for large countries; it is for small States like mine. Its purposes and principles are not only for the rich and powerful, but for the poor and the powerless. It is the weak who need it most and whose adherence to it is often truest.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Castro Cordoba (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica congratulates you, Mr. President, and all your team on your work in the Security Council presidency and on having proposed three important debates during your term. Holding an open debate on the purposes and principles of our Charter helps us return to our roots and the basic criteria of our Organization, and to confirm that, yesterday as today, they remain relevant. We, the peoples of the United Nations, must redesign the institutional architecture on the basis of those building blocks in order to address the challenges of the new millennium.

Let me refer to two aspects of the purposes and principles of the Charter that Costa Rica considers important and can help the ongoing discussion.

The first is the relationship between the principle of non-intervention and the responsibility to protect. Costa Rica, as a small country with no military that has placed its security and the defence of its sovereignty in the hands of the international multilateral system, upholds the principle of non-intervention. That principle, however, is not unlimited, not only in situations that call for the implementation of Chapter VII of the Charter but also when States should be responsible and the guarantors of the security and welfare of their citizens. Sovereignty confers responsibility.

That is why our country upholds another principle that has evolved on the basis of the need to take action in the event of grave human rights violations and violations of international humanitarian law. I refer here to the responsibility to protect and its application in situations of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing. In cases where States lack sufficient capacity to exercise their responsibility to protect, the action of the international community is paramount. Intrinsic human dignity and fundamental rights are not dependent solely on States, whose legitimacy should be based on their service to and protection of their people. In that sense, the protection of human dignity is a legitimate universal concern that transcends borders and calls on the international community to act.

While important progress has been made in the past decade in terms of that principle in reports and resolutions of the bodies of the United Nations, it is important to continue stepping up efforts to enhance its recognition, development and implementation in the proceedings of the Organization. It is vital to move forward as an Organization to assist States in fulfilling their responsibility to protect, as well as in efforts to help the international community to respond effectively and rapidly, in a timely and adequate manner, when collective action to protect is called for.

The second aspect that we wish to address has to do with the provisions of Article 99 of the Charter. This Article authorizes the Secretary-General to draw the attention of the Security Council to any matter that may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security. Obviously, it refers to new cases that are not currently being discussed and have not been placed on the agenda by any other country. As the Secretary-General clearly indicated this morning, unfortunately this tool has been used only in exceptional circumstances over the past 70 years. That mechanism is a vital tool for conflict prevention and entails an independent political role given to the Secretary-General that he himself must exercise when circumstances require it. Through that mechanism, the Secretary-General can intervene in a timely manner to seek respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter, especially with a view to preventing conflicts and eliminating threats to international peace and security. But that early warning prerogative granted by the Charter is also an obligation and a responsibility. The Secretary-General has access to privileged information, such as that provided by observers in the field and the personnel necessary for carrying out political analyses that are required. He is therefore placed in a strategic position to make make those warnings in a timely manner so that the Security Council can take the take appropriate measures, and preferably preventive measures, which can also play an important role to ensure the responsibility to protect.

Given the very complex landscape that we face in terms of new conflicts and unprecedented humanitarian crises, we must use of existing mechanisms such as early warning, as well as new principles such as the responsibility to protect, so that we can take preventive action to safeguard international peace and human rights.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Çevik (Turkey):Let me begin by expressing our gratitude to the Venezuelan presidency for organizing this debate, as well as to the Secretary-General for his briefing.

The system created by the Charter of the United Nations 70 years ago has prevented numerous conflicts from turning into another world war and paved the way for today's achievements in social and economic development as well as human rights. On the other hand, the history of the United Nations is full of examples of non-compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the United Nations failure to ensure such compliance. That not only results in direct consequences, such as the loss of many lives, but also undermines the credibility of the Organization.

We need to devise sustainable solutions to make the Organization fit for its purpose, taking into account new challenges. On many occasions, the Security Council has failed to find timely and lasting solutions to problems, such as the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the tragedy in Syria. There is no accountability mechanism for inaction by the Council, which mostly results from the threat or the use of the right to the veto. That inaction is the main factor that encourages those who do not refrain from constantly breaching the provisions of the Charter to wage war against their own people. Therefore, the quest for a reformed Council is more than rhetoric and is the key to the paradigm shift that is urgently needed to put an end to such impunity.

That unfortunate reality brings me to our second point, that is, the importance of intensifying our efforts

to prevent conflicts before they occur. Societies in which policies are crafted on the basis of the dignity of their people, inclusivity and social justice, as well as on good governance, are less prone to conflicts. Therefore, only policies that address the root causes of conflicts will have sustainable results. We hope that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1) will have direct consequences in that respect. Also, polices aimed at enhancing fundamental rights and freedoms and promoting intercultural dialogue will have long-lasting results. The Alliance of Civilizations is a tool designed to that effect.

Thirdly, in the face of a potential conflict, priority should be given to the effective use of the tools enumerated in Chapter VI. The guiding principles of mediation, such as the consent of local parties, the impartiality of the mediators, the inclusivity of the mediation process and national ownership, are all consistent with the principles of the Charter.

My fourth point pertains to the protection of civilians during conflicts. An immediate end to all attacks against civilians, including indiscriminate aerial bombardments — as we have observed in Syria — is not only a moral necessity but also a clear obligation under international law. We also strongly condemn the use of starvation as a method of warfare, which constitutes a war crime. They Syrian regime continues to resort to all means to prolong its grip on power. It continues to use all sorts of force and violence — whether chemical weapons, barrel bombs, ballistic missiles, targeted killings, arbitrary detention, torture, systematic abuse, starvation or forced displacement. Those brutal policies pursued by the regime against its own people represent gross violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law. They also exacerbate terrorism in Syria. In that regard, the representative of such a regime, which is also responsible for the emergence of Da'esh, is not in a position to lecture anybody on adherence to the principles of the Charter.

As we share a long border with Syria, developments in that country have affected Turkey signicantly. We have been facing national security threats and attacks emanating from Syria since the start of the conflict, including from terrorist organizations there. Over the course of the past few days, Turkish armed forces have taken retaliatory measures, in comformity with established rules of engagement and international law, in response to attacks against Turkey from Syrian soil.

On the other hand, the mass human suffering by the intensified aerial bombardments targeting civilians in Syria is of the utmost concern. In the past 24 hours alone, air strikes by the Russian Federation have targeted education and health facilities, including a hospital supported by Doctors Without Borders, taking scores of lives, including children. The same member of the Council recently caused a new wave of massive displacement due to its continuing aerial bombardment, especially in the north and north-west of Syria. Those responsible for such abhorrent violations of international law are not in a position to lecture anyone.

The ongoing review processes on peace operations, peacebuilding and gender come into play as historic opportunities that might transform the current system into a more responsive, efficient and transparent one.

Today, the world faces new and unprecedented challenges that require concerted efforts to find innovative solutions.

First, terrorism and violent extremism in all forms remain one of the gravest threats. We welcome the Secretary-General's plan of action, particularly the view that the international community needs to adopt a comprehensive approach that encompasses not only security-based counter-terrorism measures, but also systematic measures that address the drivers of violent extremism.

Secondly, we now face the largest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War. We must exert every effort to strengthen our common commitment to respect for international humanitarian law. The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in May in Istanbul, will be a timely opportunity to address those challenges. Inclusive policies for migrants, as well as combating racism and xenophobia, takes on more importance than ever, given the unprecedented mobility.

Lastly, I would like to highlight the concept of responsibility to protect in relation to our discussion today. We believe that the responsibility to protect should not be restricted to those facing trouble in turbulent countries. The situation of populations escaping from these crimes to neighbouring countries should also be taken into consideration. With an understanding of burden-sharing, its scope should also cover the needs and the protection of such populations.

As the largest refugee-hosting country in the world today, Turkey has been a safe refuge for over 2.5 million Syrians who had to flee Syria for their lives and has also ensured that cross-border humanitarian assistance reaches millions of people in dire need on the Syrian side of the border, in conformity with its international obligations and in support of the United Nations. We believe that this major effort is a concrete example demonstrating that responsibility to protect can also be served by humanitarian assistance.

The Charter provides the necessary principles and means to maintain international peace and security. Our political will to abide by its letter and spirit and to work collectively on occasions of non-compliance is the key to success.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, and the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on assuming the presidency this month, and to thank you for organizing today's open debate. Let me also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his compelling remarks delivered this morning.

Twenty-five years ago, when the Republic of Korea was admitted to the United Nations along with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, both Koreas pledged to accept and to uphold the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as laid out in its Charter. During the past 25 years, my country has been a strong advocate and defender of the Charter of the United Nations. As my President stated in her address to the General Assembly last September,

> "The values and ideals upheld by the United Nations — global peace, the promotion of human rights and shared prosperity — have embodied the vision of the Republic of Korea itself" (*A/70/PV.13, p.28*).

Unfortunately, however, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has consistently breached that solemn pledge. Over the past 10 years, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted four nuclear tests and six long-range missile tests. These are all in violation of its international obligations, including under four separate resolutions of the Security Council. The latest show of disregard for the United Nations Charter by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea took place in the course of the past six weeks with its nuclear test on 6 January, followed by the launch of a long-range ballistic missile on 7 February. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear test and missile launch are a clear threat to international peace and security and a blatant challenge to the international community.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the only country in the world that has conducted nuclear tests in the twenty-first century; developed nuclear weapons programmes as a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and then announced its withdrawal from both the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency; officially declared itself a nuclear-armed State in its Constitution; and been subjected to weapons of mass destruction-related sanctions imposed by the Security Council.

By repeatedly violating Security Council resolutions, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has shown contempt and disregard for the functions and powers of the Security Council. To address such continued violations, the Security Council expressed its determination, through its resolution 2094 (2013), to take further significant measures in the event of a further launch or nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Security Council also reaffirmed that commitment in its press statement of 7 February (SC/12234), and its intent to expeditiously adopt a new resolution with such measures in response to such dangerous and serious violations.

In that regard, the Security Council should adopt a robust and comprehensive resolution so as not to let the leadership of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea make a mockery of it by continuing to develop nuclear weapons. If we go on business-as-usual vis-à-vis the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's repeated nuclear tests and missile launches, the entire world could fall prey to nuclear blackmail by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. An extraordinary threat requires an extraordinary response. The Security Council, through its tough and effective sanctions, must make clear to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that it will no longer tolerate its nuclear weapons development.

Twenty-five years ago, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea solemnly pledged to comply with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations as a new Member. But during the past decade, the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea has persistently violated all Security Council resolutions related to it. That is not only a direct challenge to the authority of the Security Council, but also a contradiction to both the letter and spirit of the pledge it made. This breach of obligations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea calls into question its qualification as a Member of the United Nations.

Once again, I assure you, Sir, that the Republic of Korea remains faithful to all provisions of the United Nations Charter. We express our unyielding willingness to defend its purposes and principles as key elements for ensuring international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Albania.

Mr. Nina (Albania): Allow me first to thank you, Sir, for organizing this open debate on respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and for the interesting concept note prepared for it (S/2016/103, annex).

Albania aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union. I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

As rightly provided pointed out in the concept note, the United Nations emerged from the ashes of the Second World War with a firm promise. Nothing indeed could have been nobler in 1945, as they are today, than the common ideals enshrined in the Charter of the Organization, including, notably, "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind". We further concur with your assessment, Sir, that throughout its history the United Nations has registered significant achievements as regards peace, security and international cooperation. Indeed, there has been immense progress during the seven decades of the United Nations existence — progress that has brought real change.

Undeniably, the United Nations has worked for and greatly contributed to the transformed, better world we live in today. It has brought to life, inter alia, the vast issue of human rights, enshrined in the Preamble to the Charter —

> "to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small"

— which was almost inexistent before the founding of the United Nations. It represents the basis of the very important core treaties whose fiftieth anniversary we mark this year: the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The failure to fulfil the so-called firm promise of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war has also been constant. The solemn pledge of "never again" has been repeated too often, and man-made tragedies keep recurring, challenging the belief in humankind's capacity to learn from its failures. Over the past 70 years, the Charter has not always been implemented in the manner that a literal reading of the text might suggest, even though, since the end of the Cold War, we have seen its reinvigoration. Millions of people across the world have had no other choice than to water down their illusions faced with wars, atrocities and massive human rights violations from which the United Nations has solemnly pledged to save succeeding generations. Important recommendations on several situations from the General Assembly and other United Nations mechanisms have, most regrettably, not been referred to the International Criminal Court.

We have entered an era in which armed conflicts are greater in complexity and numbers of actors, broader in tactics and weapons used and, above all, more atrocious in the human suffering they cause. The response of the international community should also be adapted to the new reality and the challenges we face. Increasingly, the international system is beginning to reach the more remote areas of social and political change, but the United Nations mechanisms were not originally designed to focus on them. It is therefore imperative to adapt the United Nations to allow a more active response to political and humanitarian abuses.

In 2005, 60 years after its founding, the United Nations World Summit provided an opportunity to reform the United Nations to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. The responsibility to protect, in particular, has catalysed important developments during the past 10 years. Progress has been made in building a global political consensus around the responsibility to protect as a very practical and effective framework for preventing mass atrocity crimes.

Developing the norm alone does not provide for prevention or protection. The growing support for the normative framework should be matched by

the necessary political will and, most importantly, resources to prevent atrocity crimes. The rise of violent extremism and non-State armed groups perpetrating atrocities, particularly against ethnic and religious minorities, continues to be one of the most pressing challenges, and it must be defeated.

Only recently, on the occasion of attaining 60 years of United Nations membership, Albania reaffirmed once again its full commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its firm belief in effective multilateralism and international cooperation as the best means to respond to old and new threats and the challenges of our time. The Charter has tasked the Security Council, as the organ responsible for maintaining peace and security, to act swiftly and resolutely when countries are confronted with situations of mass atrocity and grave human rights violations, and when States are at risk of experiencing genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing.

We, unfortunately, know only too well what happens when the Council fails to live up to its responsibilities. The use of the veto in such cases betrays the trust of millions of people for whom the United Nations is the only hope. It openly disregards the victims, it empowers dictators and other human rights violators, and undermines international efforts to end impunity. In this respect, Albania wishes to reiterate its strong supports for the French proposal and the efforts of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group to draft a code of conduct regarding the non-use of the veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

In concluding, allow me to go back to where it all began — to the noble idea of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war — in order to recall that the authority and legitimacy vested in the Security Council to maintain or restore international peace and security has no precedent in international relations, and that the Council must be up to its responsibility and justify world confidence in fully upholding the principles enshrined in the Charter. Discussions this year on the draft text on the responsibility to protect will offer us yet again an opportunity to renew and further the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ethiopia.

Mr. Alemu (Ethiopia): Let me start by thanking the Venezuelan presidency for organizing this open debate on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. I wish to express appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing.

In spite of so many challenges and shortcomings, the United Nations has been and continues to be an indispensable organization. Its Charter principles and purposes also remain as relevant today as they were 70 years ago in safeguarding international peace and security, promoting respect fo human rights, and ensuring sustainable development for all. The issue is how we can apply them, in a manner that is consistent with the realities of our time, to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

We are indeed living in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, and what happens in one corner of the world — be it terrorism, climate change or a health pandemic — can easily affect us all. No one can be immune from these problems, nor can anyone can claim to have the panacea to address them alone. We can do so only if we collectively work together, but that is easier said than done.

That is why we are yet to take full advantage of what the United Nations can offer to help us overcome the constraints of self-defeating policies based on narrow national interest calculations, which ipso facto lead to double standards, which in turn undermine the credibility of the United Nations as a custodian of international law concerning principles governing inter-State relations. Here, the most critical matter is to be forthright in our fidelity to the principle of the sovereign equality of nations without allowing the principles to be used as a shield — as often happens — against actions aimed at addressing gross human rights violations.

As we have witnessed recently, it is indeed possible to find common ground in addressing some of the most pressing challenges of our time through dialogue and negotiation, in line with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. All States, big or small, have responsibility in that regard. The Iranian nuclear deal, the Paris Climate Agreement, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (General Assembly resolution 70/1), the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for sustainable development — all

achieved through painstaking negotiations — no doubt represent the triumph of the United Nations and multilateral diplomacy. However, we should not only draw lessons from our achievements, but also have the courage to admit our shortcomings and make all the necessary efforts to redress them.

I wish to conclude my remarks by quoting the address delivered by Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia to the General Assembly in October 1963. He stated the following:

> "The Charter of the United Nations expresses the noblest aspirations of man: abjuration of force in the settlement of disputes between States [and] the safeguarding of international peace and security.
>
> "But these, too, as were the phrases of the Covenant [of the League of Nations], are only words; their value depends wholly on our will to observe and honour them and give them content and meaning....This Organization and each of its Members bear a crushing and awesome responsibility: to absorb the wisdom of history and to apply it to the problems of the present, in order that future generations may be born, and live, and die, in peace." (*A/PV.1229, paras. 5 and 6*)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Ms. Mammadova (Azerbaijan): I should like to thank the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for convening this debate and acknowledge the very useful concept note (S/2016/103, annex). We appreciate the briefing given by the Secretary-General.

My delegation endorses the statement delivered by the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Kuwait on behalf of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Azerbaijan subscribes to the centrality of the United Nations, which has enabled the development of norms governing contemporary international relations and provided for a stable international order. In the face of diverse and complex challenges, the Charter of the United Nations should continue to be a guiding framework. The principles enshrined in the Charter reflect fundamental values. The principles of sovereign equality, the non-use of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, and respect for territorial integrity are prerequisites for peaceful coexistence among nations, sustainable development and the promotion and protection of all human rights. The maintenance of international peace and security requires Member States to work collectively in order to achieve those objectives with great efficiency.

On its part, the Security Council, as the custodian of international peace and security, should enforce measures of collective security more effectively. In its conduct, the Security Council should take the lead in safeguarding respect for and application of the principles and purposes of the Charter. We fully agree with the view that there is a need to eliminate double standards in addressing violations of the Charter, as well as the selective application of rules and concepts. The Council's inaction against persistent threats is a serious deviation from its responsibilities under the Charter.

The growing complexity and cost of crises reinforce our conviction that the role and responsibility of the Security Council is not limited to the formal adoption of resolutions. It is far more important that the Council operate more consistently than it has heretofore in enforcing its own resolutions, thereby adhering to and upholding the rule of law.

One of the main challenges threatening international peace and security remains international conflicts. The ongoing armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan continues to pose a serious threat to international and regional peace and security. For more than 20 years, Armenia has been using force to undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan in blatant disregard of international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions. It has occupied around one-fifth of the territory of Azerbaijan and has carried out ethnic cleansing against almost 1 million Azerbaijanis. As a result, there is not a single Azerbaijani remaining in Armenia nor in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. At present, the front line extends far beyond the Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, reaching the Fizuli and Agdam districts.

Continued occupation of a large portion of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the armed forces of the Republic of Armenia is the main obstacle to the settlement of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the only source of the escalation and recurrence of hostilities and casualties.

It is therefore ironic that the representative of Armenia, the country that bears the primary responsibility for unleashing the war against

Azerbaijan, for committing other serious crimes during the conflict and for failing to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, goes so far as to lecture Member States about such notions as peace, security and human rights. In practice, the successive Governments of Armenia have established a notorious pattern of complete disrespect for the generally accepted norms and principles of international law. Committing war crimes and crimes against humanity, sponsoring terrorism, adhering to dubious ethnoreligious ideologies and raising territorial claims against its neighbours have become a sort of norm of conduct for Armenia.

Armenia policies have nothing in common with the realization of the right of self-determination. The entity that Armenia tries to present as independent, the so-called Nagorno Karabakh Republic, is nothing more than a puppet regime under the occupation and direct control of the Government of Armenia. All key figures of the puppet regime illegally established by Armenia in the occupied Nagorno Karabakh region of Azerbaijan are in fact actors in the political system of Armenia, including the incumbent President of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan.

The conflict can be resolved only on the basis of full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders. Armenia must withdraw its armed forces from the Nagorno Karabakh and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan, constructively engage in the conflict settlement process and comply with its international obligations.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Azerbaijan's support for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the collective work undertaken to advance international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Sandoval Cojulún (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Guatemala thanks the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for organizing today's debate. We are also grateful for the briefing by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Guatemala agrees with the approach set forth in the concept note to guide this debate (S/2016/103, annex), in the sense that this Organization throughout its history has made significant achievements in various areas, such as peace, security, international cooperation, human rights, decolonization and economic and social development. In accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council has, since its inception, been entrusted with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, with the aim, inter alia, of not repeating the mistakes committed before the founding of the Organization.

To achieve that, it was recognized that there was a need for a set of mechanisms and tools to be applied, depending on the situation and circumstances of each particular case. In most cases, unfortunately, those tools have been used to stop conflicts already under way rather than to prevent them before they burst out, with devastating consequences, especially for the civilian population. Furthermore, on prevention, it is important to promote the responsibility of States in protecting their civilian populations.

In addition, Guatemala has supported the traditional view that the Security Council must continue to customize its mandates after analysing the situation in question. The Council can have a strong influence on events on the ground, but ultimately peace can be preserved — or recovered — only by the parties to a conflict, whether the conflict is between States or within a State. In matters of war and peace, the international community can play a critical role, but the internal stakeholders are the masters of their own destiny.

With respect to the current situation in some African and Middle Eastern States, the Security Council needs to take a close look at its own role with regard to certain situations. The conflict in Syria, for example, which has resulted in and continues to give rise to violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and where the Council's failure to perform has had devastating consequences for the Syrian civilians. The use of the veto or the threat of use does not encourage or promote unity in the search for understanding, and the abuse of the use of the veto and the threat of its use has prevented the Council from fulfilling its mandate. Far from favouring the defence of shared interests with arguments that would facilitate consensus, the veto has obstructed and undermined the common interest and, as has been proven, is divisive among members of the Council. All of that requires us to evaluate both the

internal dynamics of the Council and the adequacy of the instruments available to the Council and the means to apply them.

As a country that has benefited from a Security Council mandate to verify its peace process, we can share our unique experience in everything related to peacebuilding and, as a country contributing troops to different missions, in the area of peacekeeping. In that regard, we take the opportunity to welcome resolution 2261 (2016), adopted by the Council on 25 January, where, taking into account the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and unity of Colombia, a special political mission was established to verify and monitor the ceasefire in Colombia and the surrender of weapons.

As we have previously stated before in the Council, the circumstances of the reality on the ground are subject to change at any time and for various reasons. In order for a judicious mix of Council policies to have the ability to prevent conflicts or to influence trends, we need a proactive Security Council. However, despite the Security Council's exceptional failures to live up to its mandate, the United Nations remains the best option we have for meeting the current challenges facing humankind.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to thank the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for convening today's debate and for providing the Member States with the opportunity to re-emphasize the importance of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his important comments at the outset of our discussion today. I align myself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union earlier.

In my statement, I will focus on three issues that, in our view, lie at the heart of the maintenance of peace and security: the peaceful settlement of disputes, human rights and peacekeeping missions.

First, on the peaceful settlement of disputes, the international legal order is the foundation upon which friendly and lasting relations between States are built. International law is even more important when disputes occur. The peaceful settlement of disputes, recognized as one of the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, makes an invaluable contribution to a more just and secure world.

In The Hague in the Netherlands, we host both the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration. And to emphasize the importance we attach to those institutions in The Hague, let me highlight the presence in my delegation of the mayor of The Hague, Mr. Van Aartsen, who is present in the Chamber today. Both institutions I mentioned — the International Court of Justice and the Permanent Court of Arbitration —fulfil a crucial role in realizing the ambitions of Article 33 of the Charter on the pacific settlement of conflicts. The upcoming seventieth anniversary of the International Court of Justice in April will be a good occasion to reiterate the value and achievements of that institution. As the host country of that principal judicial organ of the United Nations, we encourage all States to recognize the compulsory jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice.

My second point is on human rights. The promotion of human rights is a cornerstone of the United Nations. Unfortunately, the current reality in the world shows that we must do much more to realize our ambitions. Large-scale violations of human rights, happening on a daily basis in Syria as we speak, deserve action by the international community. The principles of the Charter and international humanitarian law need to be upheld at all times. We condemn situations where the civilian infrastructure, especially hospitals and schools, are systematically targeted by parties to conflict. Sovereignty should never be used as a shield by States to prevent mass atrocities from being addressed.

As former Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated, sovereignty was never meant as a license for Governments to trample on human rights and human dignity. The international community has been standing by while people suffer horribly. The concept of the responsibility to protect provides guidance on what we could and what we should do. We urge the permanent members of the Security Council to refrain from using their vetoes in cases of mass atrocities and to use all means at their disposal to increase their interaction with human rights actors and improve the situation at hand.

My third point concerns peacekeeping missions. In order to maintain international peace and security, the Charter of the United Nations allows for collective measures. By accepting the Charter, all Member States

promise to give the United Nations assistance in any action it takes. As Member States, we must fulfil that promise, especially when it comes to peacekeeping. Over the years, peacekeeping missions have been deployed in more and more complex situations. Our military, police and civilians experience that on a daily basis in the Missions in which we are active, such as the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. We also work together with other countries, especially in Africa, to train their peacekeeping units and we call upon all Member States to contribute to peacekeeping missions with high-quality capabilities, in order to improve the effectiveness of peacekeeping missions. The effectiveness of peacekeeping should furthermore be enhanced by implementing the recommendations of the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (S/2015/446).

In conclusion, as the Dutch philosopher Spinoza said, peace is not an absence of war; it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence and justice. As I have stated before, the Kingdom of the Netherlands is the United Nations partner for peace, justice and development. We will continue to work together with all Member States until those goals have been attained for the peoples and nations of the world. For we believe those goals together embody the core values of the Charter of the United Nations, which were codified to address the needs and desires of humankind on his journey towards a better future.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I understand that several delegations have requested the floor to make further statements. It is my intention to accede to those requests; however, I would ask each delegation to limit itself to the one additional statement.

I give the floor to the representative of Syria.

Mr. Aldahhak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to apologize for taking the floor again. My country's delegation would like to respond to the statement made by the delegation of Turkey. I also want to underscore the content of the statement delivered at midday today by the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. In particular, I want to stress the role of the Turkish regime in supporting terrorism and as a threat to international and regional peace and security. It is something that everyone is aware of.

Numerous delegations have addressed the subject of terrorism and described that phenomenon as the greatest danger and threat to international peace and security. It is also a threat to the stability and sovereignty of States. In that regard, we want to stress the fact that the various terrorist groups, such as Da'esh, Al-Nusra Front, as well as the various foreign terrorist fighters, would not have been able to pose such a threat had they and other groups linked to Al-Qaida not received such significant support from many United Nations Member States, in particular the Government of Turkey.

Various United Nations reports have mentioned the presence of over 30,000 foreign terrorist fighters, who have come from over 60 per cent of Member States — in other words 150 Member States — to the territory of my country, Syria, and who basically have been able to carry out criminal terrorist acts. None of that could have happened in the Syrian territory without the multidimensional support provided by the Turkish regime. That support, which Turkey has also granted to numerous terrorist organizations that are active in the region of the Middle East and in North Africa, as well as in Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and other countries, is something everybody knows about.

The Turkish regime has not stopped there. It has pursued its illegal relations with Da'esh, in particular when it comes to commerce and the oil trade and the pillaging of various antiquities and other assets as well. Recently there was direct and repeated military intervention by that regime when it saw that its terrorist friends had failed in their mission. That is how the Turkish agenda is developing in the region and how Erdoğan is seeking to see the recreate the Ottoman Sultanate in order to once again hold the title of Ottoman Sultan.

In conclusion, my country's delegation reiterates its demand that the Security Council reject those acts of aggression by Turkey and put an end to the atrocities committed by Turkey, which run counter to all the values of the Charter of the United Nations. Those acts are a threat to international peace and security.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of Armenia has requested the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Samvelian (Armenia): There was nothing new in the statement made by the representative of Azerbaijan: Armenia-phobia has become standard

practice in this Chamber. Although I will not engage in that meaningless exercise, I will make several remarks.

First, the representative of Azerbaijan spoke at length about selectivity and double standards. That is exactly what Azerbaijan is practicing. In her statement, she referred to a number of the principles of international law. Let me recall that no one is in a position to hierarchize the principles of international law. No one principle takes precedence over the other, in particular the principle of self-determination, which was missing from the statement of Azerbaijan. Thanks to that very principle, Azerbaijan is here as a Member of the United Nations. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of the members of the United Nations are here thanks to that principle.

Secondly, she referred to the Security Council resolutions. I would remind the representative of Azerbaijan that the key element of those resolutions is the establishment and observance of a ceasefire. That is something that is violated by Azerbaijan on a daily basis, with casualties on both sides. Armenia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group — the main format for negotiations on the conflict — call for the establishment and observance of a ceasefire, the establishment of an inquiry mechanism and the withdrawal of snipers. The observance of the ceasefire has been refused unilaterally by Azerbaijan.

Thirdly, the representative of Azerbaijan referred to the incumbent Armenian President, Serzh Sargsyan. It is ironic that Azerbaijan should refer to the Armenian leadership. In the 24 years of independence, not one President in Armenia out of the three, including the incumbent, has served more than two terms of office. Meanwhile, if one were to, out of curiosity, have a look at the leadership of Azerbaijan, they would come to a very simple conclusion: for almost half a century just one family has led that country — and Azerbaijan is not a monarchy.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of Azerbaijan has requested the floor to make a further statement. I now give her the floor.

Ms. Mammadova (Azerbaijan): Once again, we have witnessed a futile attempt by Armenia to whitewash its ongoing aggression against Azerbaijan. Armenia's allegation of the non-compliance of Azerbaijan with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council is yet another attempt to present a distorted view of the fundamental documents pertaining to the settlement of the conflict. In contrast to the assertions of the Armenian representative, in its resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993), and 884 (1993), the Security Council reaffirms the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno Karabakh region. They recognize and condemn the invasion and demand the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying Armenian forces. To refresh the memory of the Armenian representative, it should be noted that it was the Armenian side that rejected the timetable for the implementation of those resolutions.

Armenia's military provocations, aimed at violating the ceasefire regime, are regular aggressive acts against the Republic of Azerbaijan, and are deliberately concealed. By distributing its so-called ceasefire violation reports here in the United Nations, and speaking now about the joint investigative mechanism, Armenia seeks to justify its own continued illegal military presence and the use of force against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of my country. It tries to camouflage the fact that at present the front line extends far beyond the Nagorno Karabakh region, reaching the Aghdam and Fizuli districts, and that Armenian soldiers are deployed on those and other occupied territories of my country. Throughout 2015 alone, as a result of Armenia's illegal occupation and ceasefire violations, a number of Azerbaijani army servicemen were killed. Azerbaijani soldiers are being killed, maimed and wounded defending Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, sovereignty and State borders. In contrast, Armenian soldiers are on Azerbaijani land. Without using evasive terminology, therefore, I would like to ask my Armenian colleague what the Armenian soldiers are doing in Aghdam. What are they doing in Fizuli? What are they doing in Kelbjar? Those are districts of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

While continuing to deny its involvement and role in the conflict, the Government of Armenia openly claims its ownership, and exercises effective control over the Nagorno Karabakh region of my country. In its national security strategy of 2007, Armenia claims "to act as a guarantor of the security of Nagorno-Karabakh". No explanation is provided, however, as to how those guarantees, which affect a portion of the territory of Azerbaijan, fit into international law.

As a self-proclaimed champion of democracy and human rights, Armenia should recall its President's own words about his role in the massacres committed against

Azerbaijani civilians during the conflict. When asked whether he had any regrets about the death of thousands of people as a result of the Armenian attacks against Azerbaijani civilians, he said frankly, "I have absolutely no regrets," since "such upheavals are necessary, even if thousands have to die". Another notorious example, again from the President of Armenia, then Defence Minister of Armenia:

> "The most important thing is not the territory. It is that one ethnic group is left in Armenia. In Vardenis and other regions, Azerbaijanis used to be 70 per cent of the population. Our cultures are not compatible. We can live side by side but not wihin each other."

Another notorious example is also self explanatory:

> "Before Khojali, the Azerbaijanis thought .that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that stereotype."

Those words come from the person who holds the highest political and military post in Armenia. They speak for themselves, making any statement on behalf of the Armenian Government in the United Nations irrelevant and absurd, and providing yet another example of so-called democracy and respect in Armenia.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The representative of China has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

Mr. Li Yongsheng (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): In its statement this morning, a certain country mentioned changed status quo and land reclamation. The Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law speak very clearly to this question. If a country illegally occupies another country's territory and engages in large-scale construction, then that status quo is in violation of the Charter and international law, and is illegal. With regard to that illegal status quo, not only should it not it be accepted, it should also be stopped, and the status that existed prior to the illegal occupation restored.

If a country engages in construction on its own territorial islands and complies with the requirements of international law, such as environmental protection, then such construction and changed status quo fall within the sovereignty of the country, and are in line with the Charter and international law. They are therefore beyond reproach. The Nansha islands are Chinese territories. The so-called status created by other countries illegally occupying China's Nansha islands is in violation of China's legitimate rights and interests. It is therefore illegal and invalid.

The construction on China's Nansha islands is within China's sovereignty. It is not targeted at any country. It does not affect the freedom of navigation or flights over the South China Sea. It will not damage the ecological environment of the South China Sea. It is therefore legitimate, just, reasonable and beyond reproach.

In accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, China has every right to maintain its sovereignty, rights and interests. We have every right to stop any illegal activity that encroaches upon our legitimate rights and interests.

Maintaining peace and stability within our territory is in China's interest. China would never want to see any chaos created in the South China Sea, and we will never take the initiative in creating chaos.

While maintaining our territorial sovereignty and rights on the high seas, we will continue to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea. We will continue using talks and negotiation as the fundamental paths towards resolving the relevant issues. We will adhere to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea. We will promote the drafting of guidelines regarding the South China Sea as the toolkit to manage disputes.

We will adhere to the practice of joint exploration and development and cooperation on the sea. This policy of China will never change.

The meeting rose at 6.50 p.m.